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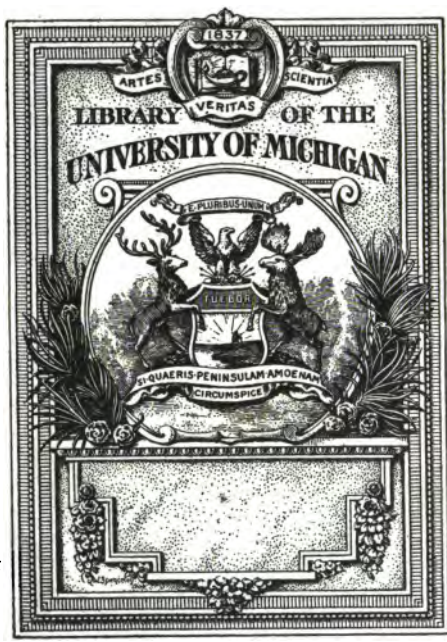
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Cyrus Redding Esq^r
Lang^{port} - 1863

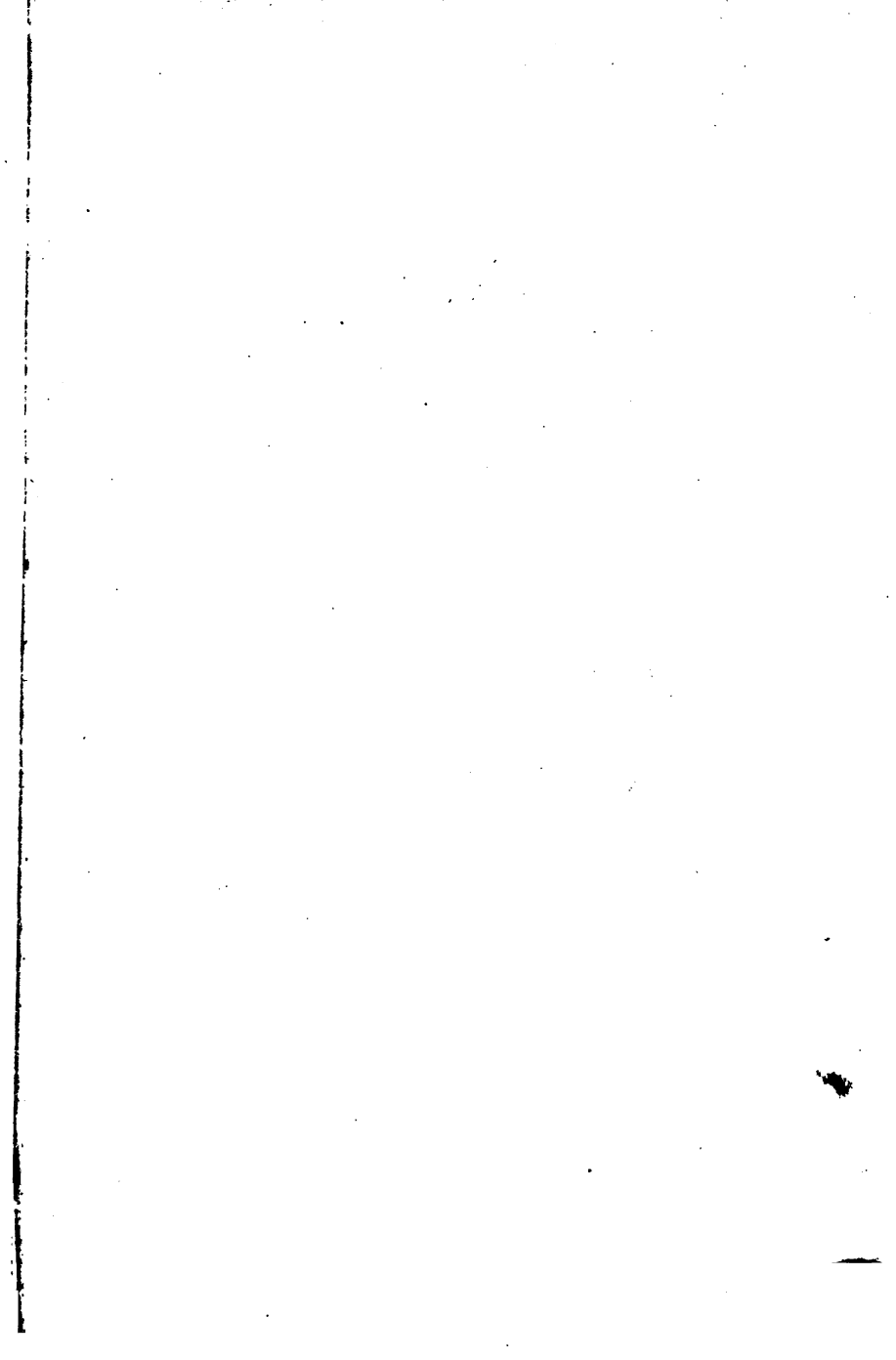
With G. H. Haskins

Kind regards

I know not the writer of the above.
He sent to me a request for my autograph.
I sent it him, and he soon after sent me
this Book by Post. Of the parties mentioned
in it, I only knew Mr. Kocove, and George
Condy. It must have had some considerable
local interest I signed hints.
Cyrus Redding.

February 1863.







Kerrall Coll.

LITERARY

59243

Reminiscences and Gleanings.

BY RICHARD WRIGHT PROCTER,
AUTHOR OF 'THE BARBER'S SHOP.'

WITH ILLUSTRATIONS BY JAMES STEPHENSON AND
WILLIAM MORTON.

~~~~~  
'TIME-HONOURED LANCASTER.'—*Shakespeare.*  
~~~~~

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—
1860.

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TO
WILLIAM MORTON,
MY CONGENIAL ASSOCIATE DURING MANY YEARS.

‘For ourselves, we are fond of the little gossiping of biography—the small talk, as it were, of a man’s existence; we like to sit upon his hearth-stone and listen to him when he is unconscious of our presence, and when his talent is as idly occupied as if, like the foolish man in the parable, he had wrapped it in a napkin.’—*James Wheeler*.

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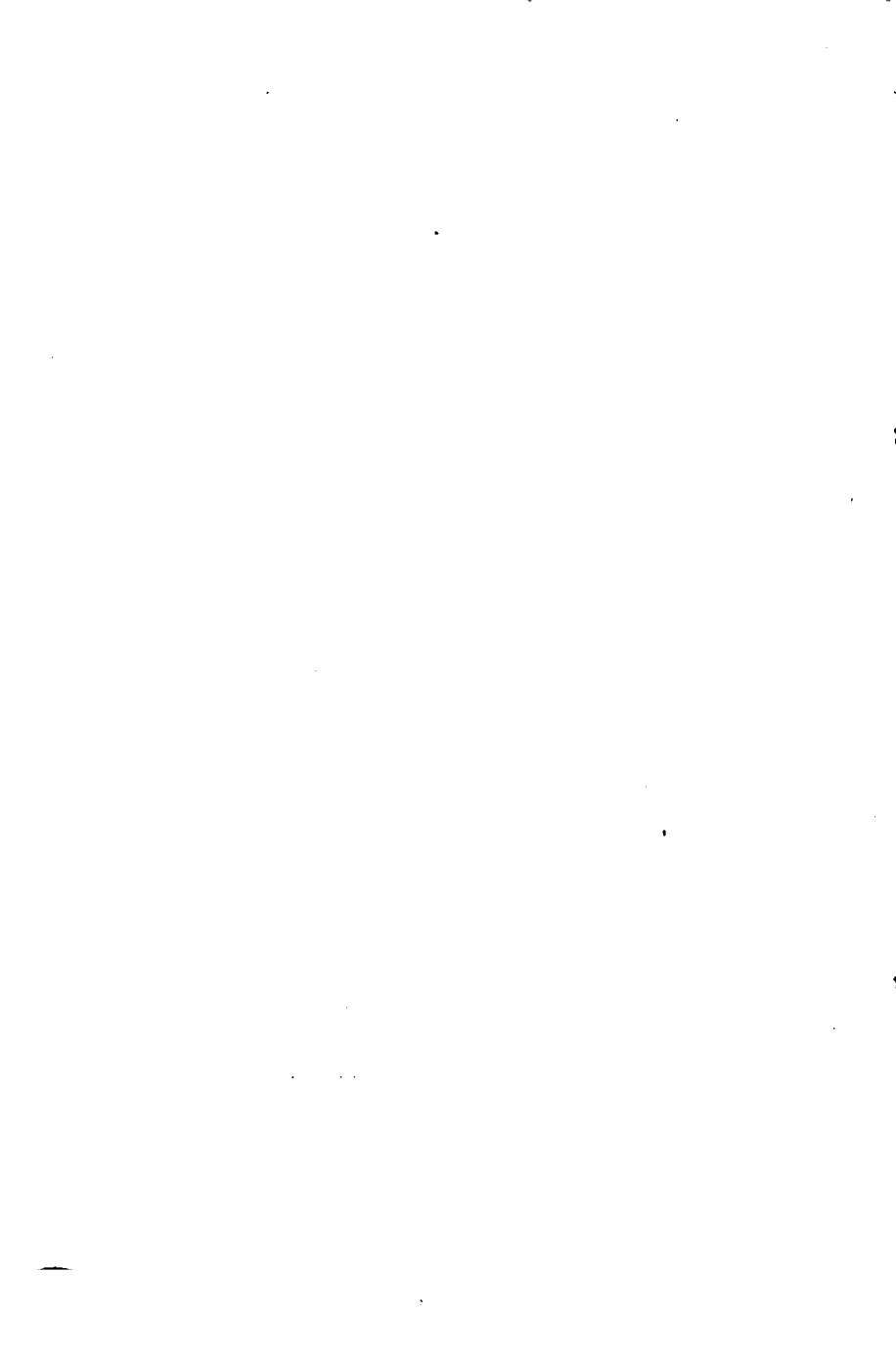
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PRELIMINARY CHAPTER.



SHREWD Scottish observer of authors and their productions once put forth a pointed interrogation—‘ Will no one write a book on a subject he understands?’ Were this pertinent query applied to me and my work, I would answer to the effect that, being a native of Lancashire, and possessing a life-long fancy for garnering her metrical treasures, I have acquired some knowledge of the poets and rhymers of our ancient Palatinate, and have become familiar with most of their productions. Various effusions, characteristic of these provincial pens, are interspersed through the leaves of this book ; with the double view of giving a taste of the quality of the writers, and of introducing and illustrating my own observations. Previous editors have gratified us at intervals with samples of our poetic literature, or with biographical sketches of our literary hands. So far as living authors were concerned, those sketches were sufficiently comprehensive ; but the narratives of the dead too often resembled the story of Cambuscan, that was left half told : rarely did they follow the poet’s fortune from his temporary residence amongst us, to his permanent home in the churchyard. People who were anxious to know where the dust of our gentlest spirits lay, and whether their

graves were neglected or duly regarded, had to seek the information for themselves. There was no guide for their edification. Knowing that the poet's rest, after his unequal contest with the hard exacting natures of the world, ought to be of the sweetest, I have often been pleased to find that the lettered stone, the flowery turf, and the drooping tree, were the suitable companions of his solitude. In some instances, however, the graves have been swept away, or are lost beneath barren soil, yielding no marks of identity. Many of the facts and figures here recorded have been searched out with diligence, as Old Mortality searched out the epitaphs of the Covenanters; and though lacking the picturesque white pony and blue bonnet, the mallet and the chisel, of that pious pilgrim, I have tried to restore some fading names to the memory of the public, so notoriously treacherous and over-crowded. Our half-forgotten bards will be found blended with our established favourites; the weak being thus supported by stronger links of the same chain.

Judging by experience, the graves most difficult to find are those of authors and artists. Generally speaking, parish clerks do not know them; and if, by dint of questions put to obliging newspaper editors, and by patient research in silent consecrated acres, you succeed in finding the stone—if stone there be—which covers the departed man of mind, it is possible his name will be absent; or if present, be introduced in characters so small and insignificant that you marvel the merit which drew you so far

from your path can be so poorly represented. On the other hand, the graves easiest to trace are those of successful traders. Enter any churchyard or cemetery you may, these favourites of fortune will be found sleeping beneath the weight of the largest tombs and the eulogy of the longest inscriptions. Yet, after all, these elaborate monuments can win merely the passing glance of curiosity, while the simplest stone, when bearing a notable name, attracts the pilgrim from afar. So the spirit of justice hovers above the churchyard, and the spirit of freedom keeps her company. Here is no shrinking from the empty purse, or the unfashionable form; freed from the trammels of pride, mind mingles with mind in a communion purely spiritual, dispensing with the formality of an introduction, or even the presentation of a card. It was surely on such republican ground that Diogenes affixed his tub, and doubtless to gravestones that Shakespeare alluded when he wrote of the sermons which stones convey.

A portrait, it has frequently been observed, is all we can rescue from the grave. This observation is correct, if taken in its widest sense; so as to include not alone the likeness of the individual lost, but also the picture of his cherished home, and the view of his final resting-place. Impressed years ago with the interest and value attached to such memorials of the good and talented, Mr. Morton and I have occupied our leisure hours—and something more—in forming a little gallery of local

art treasures ;—a portion of which has been engraved for the purpose of rendering this volume graceful and attractive : the remainder may possibly be given at some future period.

As each division of my subject will explain itself, further prelude is uncalled for. It will be sufficient, I think, to present a truthful description of the city in which I write, and near to which most of the authors mentioned in these pages have had their being, and now take their rest.

MANCHESTER.

From the Poetical Works of the late John Bolton Rogerson.

And this, then, is the place where Romans trod,
 Where the stern soldier revell'd in his camp,
 Where naked Britons fix'd their wild abode,
 And lawless Saxons paced with warlike tramp.
 Gone is the castle, which old legends tell
 The cruel knight once kept in barbarous state,
 Till bold Sir Launcelot struck upon the bell,
 Fierce Tarquin slew, and oped the captive's gate.
 No trace is left of the invading Dane,
 Or the arm'd followers of the Norman Knight;
 Gone is the dwelling of the Saxon thane,
 And lord and baron with their feudal might;
 The ancient Irwell holds his course alone,
 And washes still Mancunium's base of stone.

Where once the forest-tree uprear'd its head,
 The chimney casts its smoke-wreath to the skies,
 And o'er the land are massive structures spread,
 Where loud and fast the mighty engine plies;
 Swift whirls the polish'd steel in mazy bound,
 Clamorous confusion stuns the deafen'd ear,
 The man-made monsters urge their ceaseless round,

Startling strange eyes with wild amaze and fear ;
And here amid the tumult and the din,
His daily toil pursues the pallid slave,
Taxing his youthful strength and skill to win
The food for labour, and an early grave :
To many a haggard wretch the clanging bell,
That call'd him forth at morn, hath been a knell.

But lovely ladies smile, in rich array,
Fearing the free breath of the fragrant air,
Nor think of those whose lives are worn away
In sickening toil, to deck their beauty rare ;
And all around are scatter'd lofty piles,
Where Commerce heapeth high its costly stores—
The various produce of a hundred isles,
In alter'd guise, abroad the merchant pours.
Learning and Science have their pillar'd domes ;
Religion to its sacred temples calls ;
Music and Art have each their fostering homes,
And Charity hath bless'd and sheltering halls ;
Nor is there wanting, 'mid the busy throng,
The tuneful murmurings of the poet's song.



J. B. Rogerson.

While this work was going through the press, Mr. Rogerson expired, at the Isle of Man, where he had fixed his residence only two months previously. His long suffering, with which many will be familiar, was terminated by the presence of mortification, preceded by amputation, on the fifteenth of October, 1859, in his fifty-first year.

The year 1859 has proved singularly fatal to our leading Manchester men,—men, I mean, who, emanating from Manchester, have won for themselves a leading position in Literature, or in Art. Thomas Kibble Hervey, Frank Stone, Thomas de Quincey; these are noble names, over which we may linger with regretful pride. One of Mr. Hervey's classic poems—pure and lofty—will give pleasure to every reader of taste:—

PSYCHE.

From 'Gems of Modern Sculpture.'

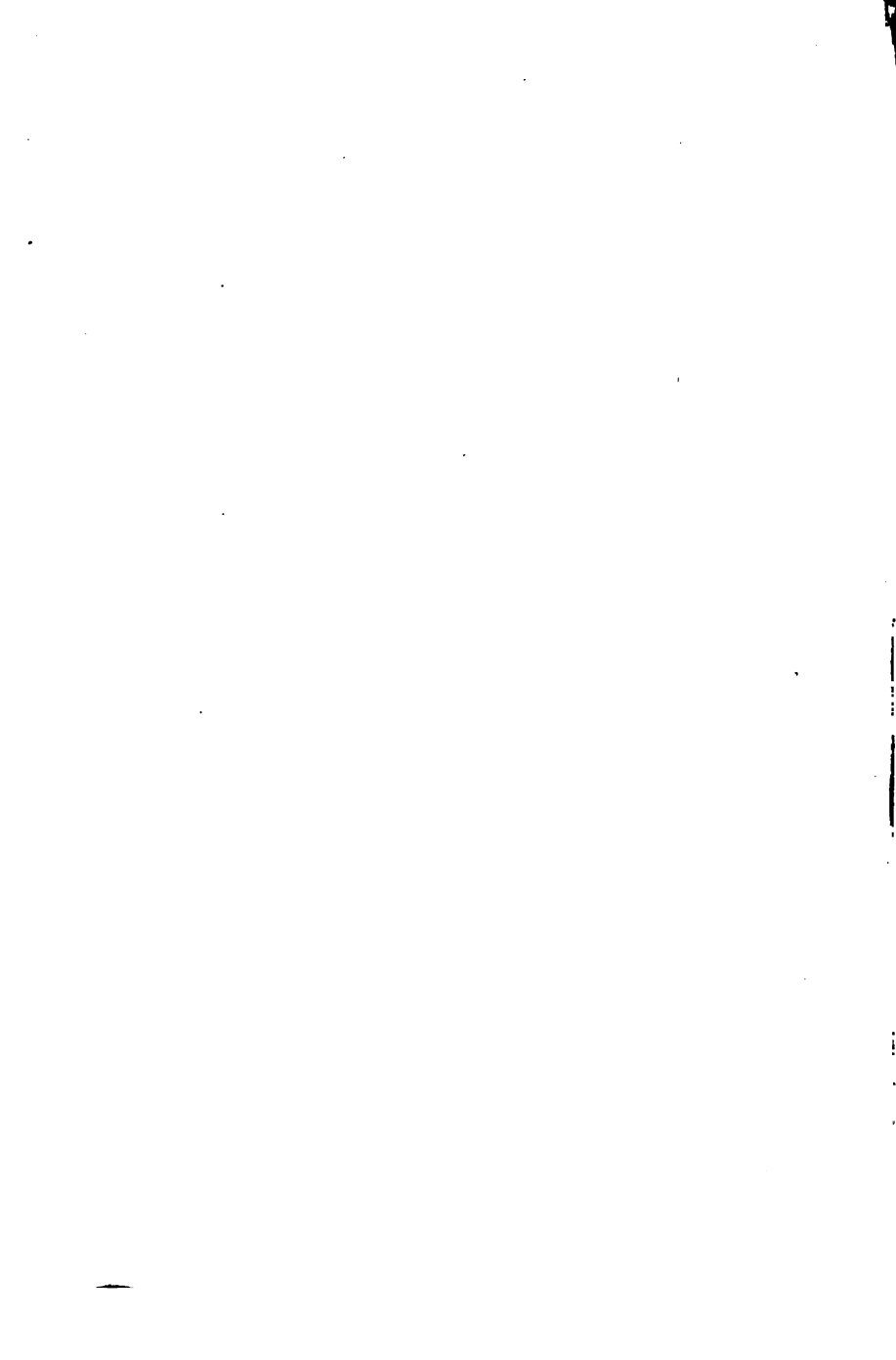
They wove bright fables in the days of old!
 When reason borrow'd fancy's painted wings;
 When truth's clear river flow'd o'er sands of gold,
 And told, in song, its high and mystic things!
 And such the sweet and solemn tale of her,
 The pilgrim-heart, to whom a dream was given
 That led her through the world—Love's worshipper—
 To seek, on earth, for him whose home was heaven!
 As some lone angel, through night's scatter'd host,
 Might seek a star which she had loved—and lost!
 In the full city—by the haunted fount—
 Through the dim grotto's tracery of spars—
 'Mid the pine temples, on the moonlit mount,

Where silence sits, to listen to the stars—
In the deep glade, where dwells the brooding dove—
The painted valley—and the scented air—
She heard far echoes of the voice of Love,
And found his footsteps' traces everywhere!
But never more they met!—since doubts and fears,
Those phantom-shapes that haunt and blight the earth,
Had come 'tween her, a child of sin and tears,
And that bright spirit of immortal birth;—
Until her pining soul and weeping eyes
Had learned to seek him only in the skies,—
Till wings unto the weary heart were given,
And she became Love's angel-bride—in heaven!

To those who believe in the romantic and beautiful theory that 'Society has need of poets as the night has need of stars,' the present volume may prove a not unwelcome addition to our local literature.

R. W. P.

MIDSUMMER DAY, 1860.



LITERARY
Reminiscences and Gleanings.

PART I.
OUR ELDER BARDS.



JOHN BYROM.

From the original sketch by his friend, Dorning Rasbotham, Esq.

It is just one hundred and sixty-eight years this current February of eighteen-fifty-nine, since JOHN BYROM, the father of our metrical literature, came into existence. 'The parish of Manchester' says Whitaker, in reference to the

earliest period of our history, 'was a wild and unfrequented woodland.' Wild it remained, as regarded poetry, until the and witty stenographer cultivated the friendship of the Muses, immortalised his Phœbe in their sweet measures. There was much of romance in Mr. Byrom's early courtship and marriage, though but little of that charming element appeared in his early struggles for subsistence. Those struggles fortunately ended before they had soured his disposition, and they consequently served to give zest to the comforts of Kersal Cell, when that desirable summer retreat,—that 'quiet place of yours,' as the gentle and loving Phœbe termed it,—came into his possession by inheritance. Here, during twenty-three years, he had the privilege of musing beneath his own tree. It is thus, according to Thomas Miller, that every poet ought to muse. The Doctor's tree at Kersal Cell is no modern upstart of the earth, but is truly a scion of the old sylvan nobility. It has braved the elements, like our national banner, near upon a thousand years, and has no marrow within many a vernal league. Mr. Byrom's incidents of travel in foreign lands gave diversity to his quiet rambles along the banks of the Irwell, while his frequent residence in the metropolis afforded food for his friendly gossipings in Hunter's Lane. When these grew tame he drew excitement from the romantic incursion of Prince Charlie and his wandering horde of blue bonnets; or from the shocks of earthquake which startled the isle from its propriety, and which were thought by many to herald the crack of doom, as comets have been thought to do in our own era; and he added interest to other public events by his shrewd observations, independent conduct, and searching Pasquinades. So, taken

altogether, his time, in the words of his own pastoral song, was 'happily spent,' until he arrived at a green old age: eventually dying as a poet would wish to die, in the midst of many friends, and with an extensive circle of admirers to treasure his memory.

Mr. Byrom died in an ancient house, with a curious mount in front, formerly situated at the corner of Hunter's Lane and Hanging Ditch. The building was taken down previous to the year 1770; but its likeness was preserved, with many other relics of a similar kind, by the rescuing hand of our worthy antiquary, Mr. Thomas Barritt. This picture is worthy of being revived and perpetuated. To the comfortable abode it represents came those tender and sensible letters, addressed to Mrs. Byrom, 'near the Old Church,' which occur with such pleasant frequency in the Doctor's Private Journal and Literary Remains. It was here, also, that the merry and enthusiastic diarist, Miss Elizabeth, penned her interesting record of the Pretender's visit to our part of the country during the winter of 1745. And here that, towards the close of life, Mr. Byrom confined himself mostly to his study; until, in the words of the obituary notice, 'the scholar, the critic, the gentleman, became absorbed in the resigned Christian.' The poet was interred in the Byrom Chapel, at the vestry entrance of the Cathedral, on the twenty-ninth of September, 1763; but there is no monument, mural tablet, or epitaph in remembrance of him: at least, none that I could discover. Our parish register of that remote period contains but curt and scanty records, and no exception was made in favour of its most notable name. Under the general heading of 'Burials in September,

1763,' the searcher may read '29. Mr. John Byrom.' Only this, and nothing more.



MORTON Sc

TOWN RESIDENCE OF MR. JOHN BYROM.

In one of his best poems, *Careless Content*, the Doctor's quaint, sterling character, is fairly revealed. Running through the piece is a vein of calm philosophy, the result of life experience, which the reader may ponder over with infinite advantage.

CARELESS CONTENT.

I am content, I do not care,
Wag as it will the world for me;
When fuss and fret was all my fare,
It got no ground as I could see:
So when away my caring went,
I counted cost, and was content.

With more of thanks and less of thought,
I strive to make my matters meet;
To seek what ancient sages sought,
Physic and food in sour and sweet:
To take what passes in good part,
And keep the hiccups from the heart.

With good and gentle-humour'd hearts,
I choose to chat where'er I come,
Whate'er the subject be that starts;
But if I get among the glum,
I hold my tongue, to tell the truth,
And keep my breath to cool my broth.

For chance or change of peace or pain,
For fortune's favour or her frown,
For lack or glut, for loss or gain,
I never dodge, nor up nor down:
But swing what way the ship shall swim,
Or tack about with equal trim.

I suit not where I shall not speed,
Nor trace the turn of every tide;
If simple sense will not succeed,
I make no bustling, but abide:
For shining wealth, or scaring woe,
I force no friend, I fear no foe.

Of ups and downs, of ins and outs,
Of they're i'th' wrong, and we're i'th' right,

I shun the rancours and the routs ;
 And wishing well to every wight,
 Whatever turn the matter takes,
 I deem it all but ducks and drakes.

With whom I feast I do not fawn,
 Nor if the folks should flout me, faint ;
 If wotend welcome be withdrawn,
 I cook no kind of a complaint :
 With none disposed to disagree,
 But like them best who best like me.

Not that I rate myself the rule
 How all my betters should behave ;
 But fame shall find me no man's fool,
 Nor to a set of men a slave :
 I love a friendship free and frank,
 And hate to hang upon a hank.

Fond of a true and trusty tie,
 I never loose where'er I link ;
 Though if a business budges by,
 I talk thereon just as I think ;
 My word, my work, my heart, my hand,
 Still on a side together stand.

If names or notions make a noise,
 Whatever hap the question hath,
 The point impartially I poise,
 And read or write, but without wrath ;
 For should I burn, or break my brains,
 Pray, who will pay me for my pains ?

I love my neighbour as myself,
 Myself like him too, by his leave ;
 Nor to his pleasure, power, or pelf,
 Came I to crouch, as I conceive :
 Dame Nature doubtless has design'd
 A man the monarch of his mind.

Now taste and try this temper, sirs,
Mood it and brood it in your breast;
Or if ye ween, for worldly stirs,
That man does right to mar his rest,
Let me be deft, and debonair,
I am content, I do not care.

In the Manchester Iris for the year 1822, appeared a familiar epistle in rhyme, which showed that Mr. Byrom's poems became known and appreciated in America immediately after their publication here, in 1773. As the Iris is now forgotten, except by those inveterate bookworms who possess the singular faculty of treasuring most the tomes that suffer most neglect from the multitude, and as the lines in question have never met my view elsewhere, I may safely introduce them as a novelty; not omitting their preliminary explanation.

'The Rev. Dr. Peters, of Philadelphia, having lent the first volume of Mr. Byrom's Miscellaneous Poems to his curate, the Rev. J. Ducie, in about three days after, on St. Innocent's Day, he, Mr. Ducie, was to have read prayers; but a great snow falling, which would prevent the people from coming to the church, he addressed the following epistle to his worthy rector, desiring the bell might not be rung; and at the same time requesting that he would oblige him with the loan of the second volume of Mr. Byrom's Poems. A written copy of this rhyming letter was afterwards transmitted by Dr. Peters, to a relation of Mr. Byrom's, in Liverpool.

Dear Reverend Sir,

The day is so lowering, the snow is so deep,
From the side of my fire I shudder to creep;

And strangely am tempted to leave in the lurch
 The very good folks that may venture to church :
 But from the temptation endeavour to flee,
 Till thou, my dear Rector, determine for me.
 Besides, I'm so charm'd with the book that you lent me
 That volume the second I pray may be sent me.
 For good Mr. Byrom, I humbly opine,
 Received not his gifts from the heathenish Nine ;
 But instead of famed Helicon's classical stream,
 The waters of life must have drunk from good Beh'm ;
 Those waters of life (his writings all shew it,)
 Have made him philosopher, Christian, and poet ;
 The workings of nature, the wonders of grace,
 In his verses familiar we easily trace ;
 And in this he excels whom the world calls his betters,
 And rhymes, to his Muse, by no means prove fetters ;
 Nay more, he ne'er breaks out of honest truth's tether,
 But sense, rhyme, and goodness you'll find go together ;
 True wit and true humour glide swift from the pen,
 And in this he's superior to most other men.
 Though poignant his wit, and his humour though sterling,
 He's always good-natured, you'll ne'er find him snarling :
 In short, from experience, I'll venture to say,
 He instructs us alike when he's serious or gay.
 Are *my* rhymes like *his*? No, I'm sure I have miss'd on't ;
 But excuse this attempt, from

Your loving assistant,

J. DUCIE'

Latterly, the Chetham Society has resolved to re-point
 John Byrom's wit, revive the flowers of his fancy, and carve
 his rugged home-truths deeper into our memories. In its
 recent and forthcoming publications the Society bids fair to
 achieve its praiseworthy object, by giving to the estimable
 phenographer and poet a new lease of literary life, after his
 century of posthumous fame.



JOHN COLLIER.

JOHN COLLIER, or, as he liked to style himself, Tim Bobbin, or, as others liked to style him, the Lancashire Hogarth, was born at the village of Urmston, near Flixton, in the beginning of the last century. The precise year has been variously stated; the parish register pronouncing for 1709-10, the epitaph for 1711. His birthplace was an old-fashioned residence, in every way worthy of the original genius there introduced to the world. The half-timbered front, the pointed attics partly festooned with ivy, and the thatched roof with its projecting eaves, called to mind the familiar retreats of various British Worthies. Its picturesque porch, and, indeed, its general appearance (especially when snugly embosomed in foliage), gratified the eye of the curious gazer. It fully represented those 'free, fair homes of England,' which have been celebrated in verse by our native songstress, Mrs. Hemans, and which give such an indescribable charm to our rural landscapes. Previous to 1825 this dwelling was a pleasant reality, standing by the road side, nearly opposite to Urmston Hall; but in that year it was taken down, and a new building rose upon its site.

Fortunately, however, a picture of the ancient fabric has been secured; and now that the substance is lost, the shadow may prove an object of interest.

During the childhood of Tim his birthplace was called familiarly Richard o' Jones's. Afterwards it grew genteel, and must needs have a more refined name. The poor man grown rich shrinks from contact with worn elbows, showing a disposition to forget his early associations and friends. In this spirit Richard o' Jones's became the Ivy Cottage.



BIRTHPLACE OF JOHN COLLIER.

Within a short distance of Ivy Cottage there stood, until very recently, a rustic building of less pretension than its neighbour. This was the old school in which Mr. John Collier, the elder, once officiated as master, and in which the young ideas of Tim, that wandered, when matured, in so eccentric a manner, were first taught how to shoot. The interior walls of this school were ornamented with Latin mottoes, written, or painted; just in the way that Smollett's barber, Hew Hewson, ornamented his shop. Through the

assiduity of a friend who has relations residing at Urmston, I am enabled to present to the reader one of those singular relics.

'Dum Spiro Spero
Quid post mortem ero.'

Which may be thus translated—

My only hope, while I have breath,
Is, what I shall be after death.

The sayings and doings of John Collier have been brought so frequently before the public; so many writers have taken an interest in his life and times, and have indicated the various localities in which he moved; that but little of importance remains for the tardy gleaner to communicate. Some of these penmen have told us how, in early life, Master John left the roof of his father, a worthy country curate, in order that he might go apprentice to a certain Dutchloom weaver, residing on Newton Moor; and that, preferring head work to hand work, he abruptly abandoned the loom house, and sallied forth, with light heart and heels, to seek his fortune, traversing the moors of Oldham, and the adjacent country, as an itinerant tutor. Others have described his settling down in the school at Milnrow, his contracting of a fortunate marriage, and his rearing in comfort a moderately large family of sons and daughters. It appears, moreover, that during his long residence at this place he created for himself troops of friends, and troops of enemies to match: the first by his frank, convivial ways, and varied talents; the second, by his poetical and pictorial satires. In being witty himself, and the cause of wit in other people, Collier so far

resembled Falstaff. Even his grave has repeatedly been made the subject of fun, though of a coarse, questionable kind; and, to crown all, his ghost has been summoned to his old haunt at the Golden Ball, to serve as a medium of addressing to us a piquant, attic-seasoned Christmas Rhyme. Yet, notwithstanding all this local interest, the fame of Tim is so purely provincial, that his works have never been included in any general edition of our national authors; even the Cyclopædia of English Literature has failed to recognize him.



SCHOOL AT URMSTON.

To compensate for the scarcity of matter for the pen, I have gladly availed myself of the hoarded artistic treasures of Mr. James Stephenson,—one of the most refined and accomplished artists Manchester has ever possessed, but who transferred his services to the capital some years ago. Further, I have called to my aid the pencil and graver of Mr. Stephenson's pupil and successor—Mr. Morton: the result of our joint exertions being that Tim's life-history is briefly rendered in sweet pictures; with just so much of explanatory

letter-press intervening as will serve to bind the various flowers of art into a consistent wreath.

In reference to his illustrations Mr. Stephenson thus writes: 'They are from authentic sources. The Birthplace, and the Chair, are from sketches furnished to me by the late Mr. Jesse Lee. The School is from a sketch I made on the spot; I went over expressly to take it. The exterior looks much like a barn; but were you to take a peep into the interior, you would see it a very spacious place, and fitted up as anyone would suppose an antiquated parish school to be; and it is not unworthy of a peep.' In answer to further inquiries, Mr. Stephenson continues: 'The School stood quite alone (as you see it in the cut), on the right hand side of the road going from Stretford. The indication of water in the foreground is to represent the ditch on the opposite side of the road. It was about 1840, or 1841, that the School was sketched. The Chair is the one that Tim sat in at Milnrow, when he wielded the birchen sceptre.'



'In this arm-chair TIM BOBBIN sat.'

It is but recently that one of Tim's scholars, probably the last of the lengthy line, died at Milnrow, at the advanced age of eighty-five years. The old man—James Lord—frequently reverted with pleasure to the unique schoolmaster of his early days.

According to the figures—1725—cut prominently over the lintel of the school-house at Milnrow, Mr. Collier entered upon his duties there within four years of its erection. The nature and emoluments of his office may be gathered from an advertisement of the district and period, which appeared in Whitworth's Manchester Magazine of Tuesday, March 13, 1750:—'Wanted at Rochdale, a School Master, properly qualified to teach English, the present fix'd Salary (which is like to be improv'd) is Six Pounds per Annum: A House and School Rent Free, in consideration of the Master's teaching Twenty petty Scholars, the Master at liberty to take in what Number of Scholars he can teach over and above the Twenty, for his own Benefit. For further Particulars apply to the Trustees, who will meet at the Roebuck in Rochdale.' It has been stated that the salary Tim received was twenty pounds a year; but this statement is fairly open to question, as it appears unlikely that Milnrow would pay twenty pounds for a preceptor, while its more important neighbour paid only six pounds. Unless, indeed, Tim instructed for the money all comers, retaining no 'petty scholars' for his own additional benefit. John Collier's school is now used for the purposes of vaccination; a printed notice to that effect being posted on the door at the time of our visit.

While taking some refreshment in the Tim Bobbin tavern at Milnrow, we asked the landlady for a peep at the curiosi-

ties over which Edwin Waugh had once lingered so lovingly, as recorded in his Lancashire sketches. Nothing of the kind remained. All that could be discovered, after much 'spirrin,' was an imperfect copy of Tim's printed works, and an oval frame that formerly contained a picture of, or by, the village mentor. The tavern had lately changed hands, and it was supposed the outgone tenant had removed the treasures we sought. The landlady took us to view Mr. Collier's cottage, situated at the Beal side, which she had always understood to be his birthplace. The cottage, constructed of light-coloured stone, is a plain square building, of larger dimensions than its neighbours, and of superior appearance. Though not strikingly rich in pictorial qualities, it is environed by massive moors and outstretching meadows; while the clear diminutive river that flows merrily by the spot has doubtless rippled many a soothing tune in Tim's musing ear, and reflected to his appreciative eye many a translucent picture. He was not the man, however, to watch the stream tearfully, or with thoughts too deep for tears, as Bryant and Tennyson have since done. More droll than pensive,—more grotesque than graceful, were the creations of his fancy. Puck was his favourite fairy: and as the village schoolmaster sat in his flower-woven arbour, smoking his pipe and soaking his clay, after the manner of Toby Filpot; or stood on the margin of the water with rod and line, a disciple of Izaak Walton; that frolicsome Puck suggested all those eccentric productions which became familiar, in books and in paintings, for many a mile round Tim's habitation.

As a slight memorial of our visit we brought away a sketch of a device—a combination of figures, letters, and scroll-

work—which at once indicated the age of the house and formed a tasteful ornament over its entrance.



A MITE FROM MILNBROW.

Mr. Collier, it may be remembered, was married in 1744, at Rochdale Church, to Mary, the buxom daughter of Mr. Clay, of Flockton; and the erection of this comfortable home for the newly-wedded pair, at the expense of the bride's father, was commenced, it appears, almost immediately after the bridal ceremony. They held it on a nine hundred and ninety-nine years' lease, at the small chief rent of a shilling a year.

During the autumn of 1763 a lengthy advertisement of Mr. Collier's, in mingled prose and rhyme, was several times inserted in the Manchester Mercury. This announcement, if not very poetical, is assuredly very characteristic of the writer; and as any effusion of the quaint humorist,—the provincial Peter Pindar,—must possess a certain interest, its revival needs no apology.

'Now in the Press, and speedily will be published, price one shilling stitched only to subscribers; to all others one shilling-and-sixpence, embellished with copper plates de-

signed by the author, and engraved by Mr. Barlow, of Bolton, and sold by Messrs. Newton, Clark, and Harrop, booksellers, in Manchester, *Tim Bobbin's Toy-Shop Opened*; or his whimsical amusements. Containing his view of the Lancashire dialect (with a large glossary) being the adventures and misfortunes of a Lancashire clown. The poem of the Blackbird, or whistling ousel. The Goose, a Poem (by an unknown hand) corrected by T. B. A humorous (but real) codicil to a conjuror's will. Prickshaw Witch blown up, or the conjuror out-conjured. Hoantung's letter to the Empress of Rishworth, alias the queen at the booth. A letter to T. P. Esq., being an explanation of the above letter, and a state of the case between her ladyship and the author. Together with several humorous epistles, epitaphs, &c. in prose and rhyme. Also some original Lancashire, Scotch, and other letters, never before published.

To his old friends Timothy Bobbin sends greeting.
 Tim now presents you with his dismal case;
 His pocket's empty—rueful is his face!
 And wishes he some other notes could sing,
 Than rhyme and poverty, this genial spring:
 But Cuckoo-like, he comes with the old strain,
 'My crap's aw done, and I am poor again.'
 And once more begs subscriptions from his friends;
 Not for their own—but purely for his ends;
 Yet he's some fears, the goods he puts to sale,
 Your sterling cash will never countervail.
 But has some hopes when th' leaves are shuffled o'er
 You'll not be cheated—worse—than heretofore.
 But should it prove a bite?—then ne'er believe
 Another rhymer, for they'll all deceive.
 And let Tim always, for his hums, and lies,
 Drink small beer after, till the rascal dies.

N.B. As the above will be printed off in two or three weeks from the date hereof, Tim Bobbin desires all his friends who have been so good as to collect subscriptions for him (and for which he returns his public thanks) to send

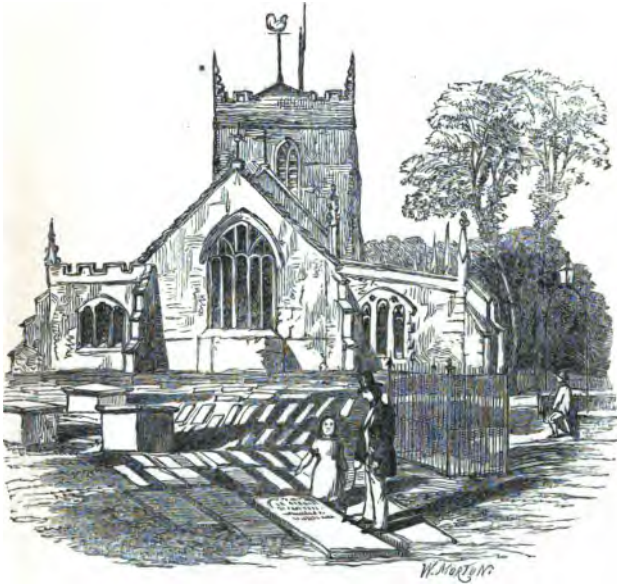
him in their subscription papers, or the names of their respective subscribers; or at least the number they desire to be sent them, directed to himself, to be left at the Roebuck, Rochdale.'



TIM'S COTTAGE AT MILNBOW.

The Roebuck Inn of to-day is not the Roebuck of 1763. The building is modern, and no relic of Tim appears within its walls. Mr. Collier's other noted house of call, the Golden Ball, in Packer Street, looks more in keeping; though even here not the slightest memorial can be found of the man who made the place famous. Fortunately for us, we needed not such stimulants to create an interest in all we saw. The

large ball, newly gilded, projects prominently from the front of the tavern over the old, narrow, hilly, and curiously-picturesque street: which street is worthily delineated in Mr. Roby's Traditions of Lancashire.



ROCHDALE CHURCH.

On mounting the many steps which lead in this direction to Rochdale church-yard, we suddenly found ourselves at the culminating point of all the interest that is attached to Tim Bobbin. It is here, where his dust perished, that his name is most cherished. When we had glanced over a few grave-stones a man in passing us from the church-stile entrance,

said, 'See you; yonder's it:' as confidently as if there were only one epitaph in the churchyard,—that one being Tim Bobbin's. This epitaph, written originally by one of the sons of the rhymer, was first cut in 1818; but becoming obliterated by years and the pressure of pilgrim feet, was latterly re-chiselled. Several new names have been placed on the stone. As these are waifs and strays of authentic family history, they may serve to correct some erroneous impressions which have hitherto passed current. Appended is a literal copy of the notable inscription as it now appears.

Here

lies the body of *John Collier*, of Milnrow, who died 14 July, 1786, aged 75 yrs. *Tim Bobbin*.

Here lies John and with him Mary,

Cheek-by-Jowl, and never vary;

Also of

No wonder that they so agree,

Mary the

John wants no Punch, and Moll no tea.

Wife of *John Collier* of Milnrow who died 4th June, 1786, aged 63. Also *Robert* his son, born *Dec.* 31, 1763, and died *Mar.* 6 following. Also *Mary* his dau^r she died *Jan.* 31st 1766, aged 12 years. Also *Jenny*, died *Feb.* 2, 1766 aged 8. Also *John Howard* his grands^a died *May* 27, 1776, aged 1 yr 4 mon^s. Likewise the Body of *Richard Howard*, who died *Sept^r* 26th 1801, in the 52nd Year of his Age. Also *Edmund Collier*, who died *June* 12th 1836, aged 58 Years.

While we were engaged in transcribing the above lines, a merry girl, just entering upon her teens, made her appearance, and declared her ability to recite the verse by heart; as also the verses on Joe Green, the sexton, and Samuel

Kershaw, the blacksmith; all of which were forthwith rattled from her tongue with great volubility and correctness. Both of these epitaphs are stated to be written by John Collier; but in one instance at least the statement is somewhat apocryphal, inasmuch as the blacksmith outlived the schoolmaster by nearly a quarter of a century.

JAMES OGDEN, the next in rotation of our local bards, was born in 1718. 'Poet Ogden,' as this writer was commonly called, lived through eighty-four years of a stormy period in history, when wars, and rumours of wars, prevailed at home and abroad. Indeed, the time, as frequently happens, was more remarkable than the man, and may warrant me, while treating of the forgotten writer, in touching on some of the remembered scenes of his epoch. At the date of Ogden's birth, the sky had but just resumed its brightness after the total eclipse of the sun, when birds went to roost, and stars peered forth, at noon-day. Scarcely, too, had the pibroch of Mar died away in the Highlands, or Jamie returned to his exile, after his ineffectual attempt to recover the crown forfeited by his father. When the second and more chivalrous effort was made to wrest the envied bauble from the head of the reigning monarch, young Ogden was in his early manhood; but he seems to have wisely stood aloof from the contest. It is pretty certain, however, that he would watch the daring adventurers, during their brief stay in Manchester, with feelings differing from those of his poetical senior, Mr. Byrom, and that none of those gay decorations which Miss Byrom, in her enthusiasm, stayed up so

late into the night to make, ever adorned his breast. He was not of the party introduced to Prince Charles, in his Market Street palace, by Dr. Deacon, whose tomb in St. Ann's churchyard still serves to attract the notice of the thoughtful passer-by; neither did he march away, with colours flying, associated with 'Jemmy Dawson,' of plaintive memory, or with Syddal and Podmore, the 'barber sparks,' as Fergusson would have styled them. On the contrary, James Ogden was, throughout his career, a consistent loyalist,—a warm friend of the Constitution in Church and State, as established by William the Third. In his convivial moods none more heartily than he would chaunt forth a national strain, or enter into the spirit of merry ringing verses like these that follow:—

'There are fifty fine colours that flaunt and flare,
All pleasant and gay to see;
But of all the fine colours that dance in the air,
True Blue's the colour for me.

True Blue is the colour of good true love,
For it melts in woman's eye;
True Blue is the colour of heaven above,
For it beams in the azure sky.*

It was fortunate for the poet that his genius led him to the winning side, for he that is doomed to struggle through life in a minority, has a weary up-hill task before him; the consoling whispers of conscience and the bright crown of martyrdom notwithstanding.

James Ogden was a native of Manchester, and was by trade a fustian shearer. Possessing a passion for rambling,

* Late Rev. J. Eagles, 'The Sketcher' of Blackwood's Magazine.

he visited several parts of England, and on one occasion extended his journeyings to the continent, where he resided a year or two. Dissatisfied with the manual labour of fustian shearing, he became master of a school in connection with the Collegiate Church. During a lengthened period he was marker, or some such officer, to an Archery Society, which flourished in our locality. From the days of Robin Hood and Maid Marian,—of Will Scarlet and Allan-a-Dale, archers have ever been merry men, making the greenwood or the tavern table resound with their glee. The archers of Manchester maintained the traditional character of their order, by regaling on the best of dinners at the close of their field sports, and their minstrel was one of the foremost to do justice to the entertainments.

In 1762 appeared his first and best known book, the 'British Lion Roused;' a poem in nine parts, published at five shillings. Prefixed to the work is a lengthy list of subscribers' names, amounting to the liberal number of six hundred. The design of the poem, as the author avers in his preface, was to paint in an advantageous light, the intrepidity of our seamen and the firmness of our landmen. The system of patronage was in full vogue, and Mr. Ogden found generous and unchanging patrons in the Lords of Ducie. But though the author had thus friends and partizans in abundance, he had no public. The small two-leaved newspaper of the time, issued every Tuesday, at three-halfpence, or at twopence-halfpenny, as the case might be, had not space to herald the advent of a new poet. Appreciative notice, or seasonable extract, was not to be thought of in his native town; no puff direct, oblique, or preliminary; and if

a review were desired, it was procurable only in the Gentleman's Magazine, or other metropolitan channel. Except at rare intervals, no long lengths of poetry made their appearance, not even from the tailors' minstrels, whose rhyming contributions are now measured out like their broad-cloth, at so much a-yard, and paid for accordingly, as advertisements. No literary Cheap Johns, or Old Jacobs, enlivened the dangerous corners, or intersected the narrow highways. John's mock auctions being a peculiarity of modern times, never entertained 'Poet Ogden' in his walks to the Market Cross, or in his rambles round the Ducking Stool. By day, his out-door amusements consisted chiefly in watching offenders ruminant in the pillory, or in seeing scolds duly immersed in the Infirmary Pond. By night, he could listen to some marvellous noise in the air, or cast an enquiring glance at the great ball of fire, with a hairy tail, which disported its luminous figure in the sky; and could talk of the atmospheric omens while taking his rest and his glass at Shaw's noted Punch House, in Smithy Door.

The literary Cheap John, incidentally alluded to, is a sharp-witted, ready-handed fellow, who spends his days in collecting printed bargains, and his evenings in converting them into cash. A few years ago he was a regular visitor at wakes and fairs; but finding the people gave all their attention to eating gingerbread, cracking nuts, gazing at show paintings, and laughing at Merry Andrew, he has left them to their folly, and pursues his business nearer home; except when he takes a trip to some country market. Bringing his truck, or sack, filled with books, his naptha lamp, his tub to serve as a rostrum, to some vacant ground, near a central

thoroughfare, he begins operations just as the day workers are at leisure to listen to him. Having delivered his opening address on the advantages of cheap literature, and shown the wisdom of pursuing knowledge, even under difficulties, he offers a lot of varieties for a few shillings, and, after much eloquence, parts with it, 'sell, or never sell,' for a few pence.

So slowly did our newspaper system expand, that the Directory of 1797 contains no mention of a news agent, or vendor; from which we may infer such names were unknown, and the services of the class uncalled for, the original news carriers being found sufficient. A few lines of the latest intelligence (adopting the journalist's mode of expression) will serve to show the completeness of the revolution that has taken place. There are at present upwards of one hundred and fifty news agents and vendors in Manchester and Salford, in addition to a little army of hawkers. Recently, the Newspaper Stamp Act has been repealed, and, literally, all who run may read; expense will not prevent them. The luxury of a daily paper is becoming commonplace, and news grows old in a few hours. Editions chase each other through the day like Indian runners, each one bearing a telegram. Consequently, many persons have become so finical in their purchases, that when the sixth edition is offered to them they decline to take it; it has been stale, they say, several minutes; they must have the impression just issued, or none. There is a charming variety of fresh ventures, plain, pictorial, and even coloured, starting forth in every direction. Generally speaking, the people are grateful for the new boon, and buy largely. Yet the difficulty of pleasing everybody is again exemplified. The news vendors are dissatisfied. They

prefer the old halfpenny to the new farthing. The change has brought them more trouble and less profit. The extra amount of sale, which ought to compensate for reduced terms, is mainly kept from them by hawkers, who besiege omnibuses, and ply most assiduously in all crowded places. There are so many additional boys in the sugar cask, that the vendors, with all their scrambling, now get a smaller share of the sweets than formerly. Yet how shall the evil be remedied? Can any one tell? Hawkers, like other folk, must live, and they do not feast on the fat of the land. When bad weather forces them off the road, they have to sacrifice their bit of stock for a passing meal and lodging. With such a flag of truce as poverty continually peering forth, who can fire upon them? We do not live at Hango.

Leaving the selling, the lending department claims a cursory glance. Of circulating libraries we had, sixty years ago, only two or three; these were kept by the leading booksellers. Novels were scarce, and authors were at a premium. A few years earlier, writers had been absolutely advertised for; the ensuing unique announcement appearing in the *Manchester Mercury*:—'W. Lane (Minerva Press) is happy to inform the public that his Literary Museum, or Novel Repository, is open for Manuscripts against the next season, and a sum from twenty to five hundred pounds is ready in his banker's hands, for works whose merit may claim an adequate purchase.' The said William Lane afterwards became distinguished for his extensive publication of novels and romances, and for the energy with which he made a market for them, by establishing circulating libraries in almost every town in the kingdom. When will an advertisement such as

Mr. Lane's again appear in print? Not until the return of the midsummer fairies; for the mental famine has been followed by an overabundant harvest. At the present time we have more books than buyers; more authors than can find publishers; more circulating libraries than can be correctly counted. The number of the latter, however, is rapidly diminishing. The peculiarly pleasant feeling begins to creep over their owners that very shortly they will not be wanted;—that the world will be able to dispense with their services. Ever and anon the papers announce some circulating concern for sale. The proprietor, being afraid of his stock losing value by keeping, engages an auctioneer, who virtually gives it away. This is leaping out of the frying-pan into the fire, with a vengeance. Yet there is some selfish consolation even in these disasters; for when all the small libraries have failed, will it not be better for the large ones that remain? On the same principle, when many soldiers are slain in battle, their glory falls, as a halo, on their few surviving comrades. So, likewise, when many youths are drafted by conscription from a village, the few lucky lads that escape are rich in buxom sweethearts.

In this strain might a May Pole be wreathed, from its foot to its crown, with the flowers of simile and illustration. But I must hasten to retrace my steps, full seventy years by the calendar, or my memory may chance to be refreshed by some facetious notice, couched in the vein subjoined: Lost, or strayed from his subject, a writer of the present time, who was under a short engagement to the men and manners of the past. He was last seen at the Equator, but is supposed to be now hovering (being a barber) about the region of the Pole.

Whosoever can apprehend the fugitive in his eccentric flight, and confine him within the sober, measured paces of a prose narrator, will be rewarded with an interest in a tardy publisher's statement, or with a share in a printer's bill.

During a quarter of a century after the publication of his *British Lion Roused*, James Ogden appears to have produced nothing in the book form, his literary efforts being confined to occasional rhymes which were never collected. Arriving at 1788, he is found an active member of a debating society held at St. John's Tavern, in this town. In that year the *Mercury* was enlivened by reports of animated meetings, in Manchester and elsewhere, to celebrate the centenary of the Revolution which saved England from the thralldom of Rome. Among the rest was a poetical address which Mr. Ogden had delivered at his club in honour of the event. This piece is remarkable as being the first lengthy original poem to be found in the principal local newspaper, though one or two Lancashire Magazines had previously indulged in rhyme. The poet's heart seems to have warmed and his ideas to have expanded with his glorious subject, for in two years afterwards he brought out a large work, entitled, *The Revolution, an Epic Poem, in Twelve Books*. This volume, like its predecessor, was graced with the names of five or six hundred subscribers, including those of William Roscoe, Dr. Percival, Ryley the Itinerant, James Ackers, and others of note. Of the last named gentleman a portrait is preserved in the picture gallery of Peel Park; and fittingly so; for though now a stranger in his own hall, he was once the patriotic owner of Lark Hill, with its fair plantations sweeping along the Irwell's bank to the low lands of the Walness.

As the dedication (to Lord Ducie) of the Revolution throws some light on Mr. Ogden's history and connections, it may be well to transcribe it entire.

'The following poem claims your Lordship's protection as the principal representative of that worthy family which patronized the author when young; and thereby rendered him more capable of adventuring upon this arduous undertaking, than he would otherwise have been, without the countenance and encouragement which your Lordship's ever honoured father held forth, to assist and polish his juvenile essays. If a general knowledge of the languages—if an acquaintance with people of rank and finished education could enable the author to characterise the speakers and actors in an epic poem with any degree of precision, these requisites were held forth by your lordship's much esteemed father, who was, take him all in all, a gentleman in whom good sense, sterling wit, and true politeness were most intimately united. The inimitable address, and remarkable ease with which he covered the disparity between the author and the noblemen to whom he was frequently introduced—the brilliancy of his wit—his general remarks upon men and manners, and what surpassed everything conceivable—his extraordinary facetiousness, tempered with true urbanity and sound philanthropy, wore off, by degrees, that constraint which superiority of rank had impressed upon the author, and gave an extension to his ideas, more permanent as the acquisition was early. Among other noble peers, the author was honoured with the notice of your Lordship's right honourable brother, the late Lord Ducie. But an early engagement in the service of your country, did not allow him the opportunity of knowing your Lordship, otherwise than by the gallant actions you performed, till he was lately introduced to your Lordship by the honourable Mr. Morton and his brother. Your Lordship's notice of the author induced him to renew his former acquaintance with the worthy sisters at Harden and East-Hide, and emboldened him to express, in this dedication, the obligation he is under to a family of which he can with truth affirm, from the experience of many

years, that every requisite to constitute real nobility have been most happily united in the characters of my ever honoured patron and his immediate descendants.'

Towards the close of Mr. Ogden's life the political world became again convulsed, and even more violently than in his youthful days. The American struggle for Independence, the French Revolution, the Irish Rebellion, and Napoleon's threatened Invasion of England, were striking events that followed each other in rapid succession. During those outbreaks Manchester was a boisterous place to dwell in, no town taking a more active interest in public affairs. True Blue was then our predominant colour; yet there was a knot of sturdy malcontents who managed to keep the political stream perpetually ruffled. The opposing factions were sadly virulent, as evidenced by the annexed quotation from the leading newspaper. If the reader is familiar with Bickerstaff's Hypocrite, as improved by Mathews, he can scarcely fail to be reminded of Mawworm in the spencer scene. The extract forms the heading to a supplement dated December 2, 1777, and heralds a triumphant despatch from General Howe, announcing our victories near Brandy-wine Creek:—'O! ye republican croakers of sedition! fly from the impending wrath of offended majesty, and hide yourselves in some lonely desert, there to bewail your manifold sins and transgressions, which ye have committed against the best of kings, as well as the most prudent and upright administration.'

It is a curious study to pore over these old-time chronicles! What strange fancies and reflections they suggest! What anomalies they present to our view! They show us that Manchester, in the seventeenth century, headed the van in

the great civil war, being the first to shed blood for the parliament and to incite the people to open rebellion against Charles. In the eighteenth century we volunteered regiments for the king, against his subjects in America. In the nineteenth century we led the way to reforms, so sweeping in their nature that the Manchester school became hateful to stars and garters. At the present writing we are veering round, with a flattering court wind, and smiling complacently on the royal arms. Could Lord Rosse's telescope be better employed than in exploring the Milky Way, searching for the planetary influence that changes our political coat just once every hundred years?

In 1797 appeared Mr. Ogden's *Emanuel, or Paradise Regained*, a volume of verse on a Miltonic subject, as the title too clearly indicates. In the Directory of that year his name, profession, and address are thus recorded: 'James Ogden, Sen. poet, 27, Wood St.' After such public announcement and recognition, the genuineness of his poetical qualifications cannot surely be doubted!

With the closing year of the last century came Mr. Ogden's final offering from the muses in the form a Hudibrastic poem, entitled *Sans Culotte and Jacobine*. Two years afterwards his long lease of life expired; the event being briefly chronicled in Harrop's *Mercury* of August 17, 1802. In this obituary notice the deceased author is described as a person of cheerful disposition, well known in the literary world.

Mr. Ogden was buried in the Old Church-yard, but no trace of his grave remains; possibly it was swept away by the hand of improvement, for that domain of the dead has been often curtailed to meet the convenience of the living.

One of the poet's sons bore his name and followed his footsteps in politics, becoming secretary to the united loyal associations of Manchester and Salford; while another son, running counter to father and brother, became a noted radical reformer. William Ogden is still remembered as a leading spirit in the Quixotic blanketeering expedition; for his share in which he was imprisoned in Horsemonger-lane Jail. He died in 1822, and was interred at St. Ann's.

Latterly the prefix of 'Poet' has oftener been applied to the reforming son than to the conserving father. Not that the son was more worthy of the title (although he penned a few political ballads, and printed them at his press in Wood Street, Deansgate), but simply because the lapse of time had perplexed the facts, and strangely blended the twain into one being. Feeling that such doubt and obscurity ought not to continue, I collected the scattered fragments of James Ogden's history and put them together, so that his identity, at least, might be preserved.

ROBERT WALKER (Tim Bobbin the Second) was born at Carrington Barn, a farm-house not far from Red Hall, in the southerly portion of Audenshaw. The whole family held strong Jacobinical opinions, and those opinions are, apparently, like the Derby motto, *Sans Changer*, for one of Robert's nephews was the venerable reformer, Charles Walker, of Audenshaw, the coadjutor and friend of Nicholson of Lees, and Samuel Bamford, and whose remains were borne to the grave in St. Peter's church-yard, Ashton-under-Lyne, in February, 1851.

In personal appearance Robert Walker was well proportioned, and stood about five feet seven-and-a-half inches in height. He followed, like his father, the occupation of hand-loom weaving, in addition to attending to his small farm. He cultivated his garden and field, thus giving diversity to his work at the loom. He also cultivated his mind more than was usual in his rough and ready neighbourhood. There are old persons yet living who well recollect him, and who describe him as a quiet, quarrel-hating individual, beloved by his acquaintances. He was consulted at all times, his advice being esteemed and acted on, contrary to the fate of advice in general. Though exceedingly anxious for reform, he was not a fierce partizan, and might be considered a specimen of a sensible, earnest-hearted Lancashire man, dwelling in troubled times, when the world, as now,

‘went jogging along,

One for the right to ten for the wrong.’

But his chief fame arose from a pamphlet that he wrote, the manuscript of which is said to have been sold for fifteen or twenty pounds. It was originally inserted, as was also his shorter political articles, in Mr. Cowdroy's newspapers, the Chester Chronicle, and the Manchester Gazette, in the years 1795 and 1796. It was afterwards printed in pamphlet form, when it found its way into every free-thinking or reforming family in the district. But at the present time scarcely an entire copy is to be met with. The copy now lying before me is probably the best extant. The word ‘Audenshaw’ is written, in faded ink, upon the end-paper; we may, therefore, prize the book as a genuine native. It opens with a portrait of Mr. Walker, in his old age, engraved

by Slack, of Manchester. Underneath the likeness may be read,—‘Tim Bobbin the Second. Born July 27, 1728.’ The title-page, also engraved, contains an illustration of the Saddleworth Sheawtink Telegraft, and the words ‘Plebeian Politics, or the principles and practices of certain mole-eyed maniacs vulgarly called warrites. By way of dialogue betwixt two Lancashire clowns. Together with several fugitive pieces by Tim Bobbin the Second. Entered at Stationers’ Hall. ‘Theaw kon exspekt no mooar eawt ov a pig thin a grunt.’ Printed and published by Slack, 8, Market-st. Manchester. 1818.’ The dedication to the tenants of the sty in general, and to the swine of Lancashire in particular, commencing ‘Dear Porkies,’ was evidently suggested by Edmund Burke’s widely-spread remark in reference to the multitude, and from various allusions scattered through his volume, it seems that the orator’s insulting expression stuck in the throat of honest Tim. The principal piece is a dialogue between Whistle Pig and Tim Grunt. It is written in the vernacular of the district, and will bear comparison with the best provincial compositions. Robert Walker’s book was very successful, fifteen hundred copies of the first edition being disposed of in three months, securing for him a foremost name among the local champions of freedom. In justice to the author, and for the pleasure of the reader, a few samples of this now rare production may be given.

SADDLEWORTH SHEAWTINK TELEGRAFF.

‘WH. Boh I’ll tell theh whot Tum, owd Dick o’ Jonny o’ Noggs, e Saddleworth, had a better shift thin o’ that’n, for som time abeawt latter eend o’ th’ last February, after him an th’ wife and four lads had’n liv’t a whole day o’nout boh abeawt a quart o’ nettle porritch an a bit ov a krust o’ breawn

George: he geet up th' mornink after, an sed to th' wife, 'I'll tell theh whot, Nan, I'm very wammo this mornink, an I conna stond for t' weave meh bit o' th' peese eawt beawt summot t' eat, an wee'n nout e th' heawse; boh I've a kratchin kom'n int' meh yed, ot iv it awnsers, we kon toar on till I wovon my wough an peese eawt:' 'Eigh!' says Nan, 'an whot is it?' 'Wha,' says he, 'ween send eawr Ned to Jone's o' Robin's o' Sim's o' Will's, for a quartern o' mele; an tell 'im eawr kase; an t' other three lads shan gooa with 'im, an stond abeawt hawv a quarter ov a mile, one behind another (for theaw knows ot th' shop is abeawt hawv a mile off,) an iv eawr Ned speeds, hee'st set up a sheawt to eawr Will, an Tum an Dick shan sheawt to one another, an theaw'st stond at th' fout-yate, an theaw mey ha' th' porritch on in a krak.'

'TUM. Bith' wunds Whistle-pig, ov o' th' scheems ot won has hyerd on (an won has hyerd o monny a won) this sheds o! won has hyerd ov a kontrivance ot tey had'n e France, fort' carry nuse a grate way in a little time, ot tey kod'n a telegraff: Mass! Whistle-pig, this shall be kode th' Saddleworth sheawtink telegraff.'

'WH. God a massey, Tum! theaw's kersunt it efeath; boh, as I're tellink theh, they sent'n th' lads off, an they stood'n oz they'rn ordert; so Ned went into th' shop, an sed, 'I'am kom'n fort' see iv yoah'n le' meh hav a quartern o' mele, for wee'n had nout t' eat sun yestur mornink, boh abeawt a quart o' nettle porritch an a brawn George krust; an wee'n nout eth' heawse.'——'Hark the' meh, Ned,' says th' shopkeeper, 'whear did teaw leet o' theh nettles ot t'is time o' th' year; for there's none heearabeawt.' 'What,' says Ned, 'I went deawn into th' Waturheawses, and leet o' som ot back o' Jim Tealier's ot th' war-offis, in a warm plek ot side o' Joe o' th' Ho Meddow: an oz I're gooink for' tell yoah, meh fether has nout boh a wough an a peese fort' weave, an hee'l goah deawn to Mossley an tak it with 'im, an ther' wil be oather munny or papper, an hee'l pay yoah oathur to neet or i'th' mornink, an a kreawn toart th' owd ot we ow'n yoah.' 'Good lad,' sed th' shopkeeper, 'theaw tells a good tale enough, iv I do oz t' seys, theawst ha't.'—So Ned

eawt o' th' shop oz fast oz he kud, and seet up a sheawt to Will; and Will to Tum; an Tum to Dick; an Dick to owd Nan, at fout-yate; and beh this shift hoo geet th' porritch on oz soon oz Ned had geeten th' mele int' his poke; for owd Dick, o' Johnny o' Noggs sweer ot no time should be lost, for he kud goah to no wark 'till hee'd summut t' eat; beh this kontrivanse theh geet'n reawnd th' porritch dish beh won kud say trapstick, after Ned koom into th' heawse wi' th' mele.'

The next quotation gives a further insight of the condition and occupations of Tim's neighbours, and shows the war-pressure of our own day to be comparatively trifling, much as we wince under it. In 1793, for instance, flour was so dear and scarce that its use was forbidden as hair powder, except by license, under a penalty of twenty pounds for each offence. In 1795, pies and puddings ceased to appear on the family tables of this district, because the poor could not, and the rich would not, indulge in such expensive luxuries.

FAMINE AND RELIGION.

'WH. I'll tell the' whot, Tum, I think ot tis fammin, ot wee'n had, has bin a very pooar prop to religeon; for I hyeard ot a fello i' th' Woodheawses went eawt won Sundy, i' th' forenoon, and kode at a heawse, an fund th' wife thrunk moppink th' flooar: Hoo sed, 'Tey'dn woven till welly midneet, o' th' o'er neet, fort' get eawt som wark, an hoo wur like't' doo oz hoo kud.' He went to another heawse, and fund a fello twinink in his peese, for he said 'Hee knew whot he had fort' doo th' nekst week, an he must hav it reddy fort' start on o'th' Mundy mornink.' He went to th' nekst heawse, and fund a wummon bakeing a batch o' oat-kakes; hoo sed, 'They'dn getten eawt som wark o' th' Setterdy, an they'dn welly klemmt o' day, an as tey kud'n na boyh th' mele till th' Setterdy-neet, hoor'e like t' bake it o' th' Sundy.' He kode at another heawse, an fund a wummon mending hur stays; hoo sed, 'Hoo're foorst t' doo a that'n,

for hoo'd no time o' th' warty;' hoo sed fur, 'ot t'is war fammin had made 'em ot tey'd'n noather time nor kloos, fort' gooa t' noather church nor chappil in, oz tey'rn ust fort doo!' So mitch for th' war proppink religion.'

For the sake of variety, I turn from poverty to politics, selecting two graphic pictures of

JACOBINS AND ROYALISTS.

'WH. Boah, stop a bit Tum, whot's th' rees'n, thinks ta, ot tees foak ot han bin so fond o' this war, an kod'n it just and necessary, kud naw abide for t' hyer it nemt?

'TUM. - Whah, 'ts soon knone, bekose the' had naw get'n eend o'th French: Boah iv ever th' French koomn be th' wur, wee'd bothor enough abeawt th' war e feith, for ther' wur no sturink eawt o'th' dur weh anny quietness, for peeosable mindot foak; for I're goink deawn Ash'n street, won day, an ther' wur sum news komn ot th' French wur'n byeat'n, an I met a mon above seventy yeor owd, an he slapt meh bith brest, an sed, 'Neaw, G—d d—n yoah, for an owd jacobin theef, ween give it yoah, neaw.' This wur a true sample o' soshul ordthur, and dooink onnor to his king and kuntry!

'WH. Whah, I knew a mon ot livt e Staleywood, ot wur utterly aghen this war ot ween had, an that wur enough, theaw noes, for t' mak 'im int' a jakobin: an he koom t' Ash'n, won day, a dooink sum arnts, soon aftur th' war wur begun, an he put up his hawse weh a red whot loyal sun o'th' koolar, at th' sine o'th' Ward, and when he'r for gooink whom, he thout he kud naw boah hah summot t' drink, an he kode for a glass o' brandy an watur, an ther' wur a too legt loyal kur o' Billy Pitt's i' th' barr, an he sed to this mon, 'Heaw ar' things gooink on neaw?' 'Wha,' sed th' mon, 'I hyeor nout particular;' 'Wha boah whot dun foak say abeawt tis war?' sed tis loyal lump ov ill manners;' 'Wha,' sed th' mon, 'sum ar for it an sum ar aghen it.' 'Wha,' sed tis church an king foo, 'boah whot dun yoah say abeawt it?' 'Wha,' sed th' mon, 'I think it had bin bethur let'n a looan.' This lump o' loyalty fell a d-mink 'im, an this brim-

stone whot loyal sun o'th' Kok an th' Barril, set in wih 'im, an sweear, 'He'd ha none sitch foak in his heawse,' an slapt 'im bith brest, an driv 'im ore th' table, an th' glass o' brandy an watur wur shed, an this peeosable mindot mon wur fene t' pay for his glass, an get his tit eawt, ot he kud get away weh his life; and this wur another true sample o' soshal ordthur!'

A humourous anecdote from Tim's Miscellaneous Pieces will fitly conclude these extracts, though it is almost a pity to divorce it from the droll illustration by which it is accompanied in his book.

THE WATER CASTER.

'It is related of old Dr. Clayton, the celebrated water-caster, in this county, that it was usual with him to admit his patients into that part of the house where an arch servant girl was about her business, there to wait their turn to approach the sage disciple of Galen. It happened, one morning, a number of persons from different parts were got together discoursing what their business was, where they came from, and the like. One man said his wife had fallen down stairs, and had been poorly ever since. The servant girl, on hearing this, immediately acquainted the doctor with the circumstance. When it was this man's turn to come before him, he says, 'Here Doktor, I brout yoah meh wiv's weatur t' look at.'—Any person who had the opportunity of hearing the doctor, knew him to be as rusticated in his dialect as any of his patients. After pouring out the water, and looking a few minutes at it consequentially, he said, 'Why, mon, the' wife has fown deawn stears, I see!' 'Eigh!' says the man, 'han yoah fund tat eawt! iv yoah kon tell that, yoaw kon tell heaw monny steps hoo fell deawn.' The doctor takes up the phial of water again, and turning it two or three times about, opposite the window, said, 'Wha, mon, th' wife mit oz weel o' bin kilt, hoos fown down a dozen steps, I find!' 'Wha,' says the man, 'yoare verre fauss, boah, oz fauss oz yoah ar, yoan'n mist it, for hoo fell deawn fifteen!' 'Wha,' says the doctor, 'did teaw bring o'th water?' 'Nough,'

says the man, 'I slat a little sope eawt, ot bot'l wud naw houd.' 'Ho, ho!' says the doctor, 'that's the very thing; weh theh doink so, theaw threw those three steps away!'

Robert Walker was interred in St. Michael's church-yard, Ashton-under-Lyne; his grave being near the porch. The following is his epitaph, as written by his son Joseph, but the inscription is now nearly worn away from the stone: 'Here resteth the body of Robert Walker, late of Littlemoss, who died May 6th, 1803, in the 75th year of his age. When the corroding hand of time and the foot of the busy passenger shall have obliterated this engraving, perhaps a memento may still remain in the integrity of heart and the wit displayed in the little pieces published by him, which will endear his memory to genius, to liberty, and to virtue.'

A short account of his death appeared in the Manchester Mercury. I fancy a more lengthened and interesting notice of that event was given in the Manchester Gazette, as Mr. Cowdroy was Tim's particular friend and fellow-reformer, but I have searched vainly for a file of that paper for 1803. His wife died before him, and they had thirteen children, namely: Ann, Mary, Esther, Joseph, James, Charles, Leah, Rachael, Robert, Philip, Peter, Phœbe, and Daniel. Joseph, the eldest son, was an intellectual man; he became master of the school at Schoolhill, Cheadle-heath, Cheshire, where he taught mathematics, and the higher branches of learning; he was here previous to the year 1780, and departed for the purpose of following tuition in America shortly before 1817. Whilst in the United States, he had a law-suit with no less a personage than Joseph Bonaparte, ex-king of Spain, touching the partition of their lands.

For the materials of this slight memoir I am indebted to Mr. George Smith,* a kinsman of Robert Walker's; and to Tim's grandson, Mr. James Walker, who often accompanied his grandfather in his pedestrian visits to James Montgomery, at Sheffield, when that eminent poet was imprisoned on political grounds.

A description of a recent visit to Lower Crowhill, the residence of Tim Bobbin the Second, will form an interesting sequel to this sketch. It is from the pen of Mr. John Higson, author of the Gorton Historical Recorder; a gentleman who has indulged his antiquarian taste by gleaning many scraps of information respecting Robert Walker.

'Crossing the line at Droylsden station, and passing a fold of houses clustering round the half timbered farm-house, known as The Lum, and skirting the Lum clough, now denuded of trees and underwood—though the etymology of Lum, or Lumb, which is Danish for a grove, evidences the district was once a wooded one. To the left is a new mill in the course of erection, and which threatens, at no distant date, to drive from this district hand-loom weaving in its unequal competition. We notice beds of onions in the several garden strips, and learn there is much rivalry hereabouts for the production of the finest specimens of this esculent bulb. Just as we fancy all further progress impeded by the lane coming to an untimely end, we notice an outlet at right angles, encircling the abode of some utilitarian genius, as is inferred from the substitute for a spout of a rope suspended from the cottage eaves. We now find ourselves in Little-moss, a small rural hamlet situated in the Audenshaw division of Ashton parish; the nature of the soil indicating that at one period the name of the place was by no means a misnomer. On the left are various specimens of low brick cottages, some century old, and covered with the charac-

* It was to Mr. George Smith that Mr. Critchley Prince wrote his familiar Address to a Brother Poet.

teristic gray slate. One of the domiciles, by the way, is a curious thatched edifice, worthy of a transference to a portfolio. Cinderland Hall, a long straggling building, erected at divers periods, lies a little aback on the same side. The house is said to contain some ancient carving. Taking another turn with the lane, we pass another row of cottages fronting the noonday sun, apparently without the range of sanitary reform, for opposite each door on the other side of the lane, a midden exalts itself, emitting certain odoriferous exhalations, anything but agreeable to persons carrying with them sensitive olfactory nerves. After traversing a considerable distance, we come to Lower Crow-hill, and just at the bend of the lane stands a low insignificant building, locally known as Th' Whistle-pig. It was originally composed of timber and plaster, but has been nearly rebuilt, or rather *more* than rebuilt, for the raddle and daub has been removed from the interstices of the wooden frame-work, and its place supplied by modern brick-work. The present tenant entered only in March last, so that nothing could be gleaned from him respecting the former occupants. This small farm was once owned by 'big' John Howard of Denton, and at the close of last century was the residence of a 'village Hampden,' well known in the trade and political discussions of that day—Robert Walker.'

Although I have here culled, in the choice language of Montaigne, a nosegay of borrowed flowers, bringing little of my own besides the thread that binds them, the lack of originality is a matter of trifling moment. My aim has been to preserve the most complete record of a man who, in his day, earnestly struggled for the right, and whose memory is therefore worthy of being kept green. This object has been better attained in the fragmentary manner adopted than it could have been by presenting a more continuous narrative.

WILLIAM ROSCOE—as all readers of the Sketch Book may remember—pursued a long and useful career, and won a standard name in English literature. He was born at the Old Bowling Green House, Mount Pleasant, Liverpool, March 8, 1753, and died in his native town on the thirtieth of June, 1831. Mr. Roscoe was interred at the Unitarian Chapel, Renshaw Street, where, in April, 1856, a monument was erected to his memory. It consists of a well-executed bust of the historian and poet, placed in a niche of gray marble.



One of his intimate friends, Dr. Traill, has sketched the

pen portrait subjoined: 'In person Mr. Roscoe was tall, and rather slender. In early life he possessed much bodily activity. His hair was light auburn, inclining to red; his full gray eye was clear and mild; his face expressive and cheerful. As he advanced in life the benevolent expression of his countenance remained, but the vivacity of the features was tempered into a noble dignity, which it was impossible to see without respect and admiration; while the clustering hoary hair round his temples gave a venerable air to his manly features.' This favourable view of Mr. Roscoe's appearance and manners has been endorsed by Mrs. Hemans, and also by Lord Brougham.

W Roscoe

A thoughtful sonnet, selected from the memoirs of Mr. Roscoe, will aptly illustrate his tone of mind, and afford a glimpse of his literary habits.

SONNET.

O'er the deserted waste of ages past,
 As lone I wander, hover round my head
 Ye mighty Spirits of the illustrious Dead!
 Mail'd warriors, laurel'd bards, whose fame shall last
 Through future times! For you the gay repast,
 The social circle, and the downy bed
 I quit, and, by your bright illusions led,
 Pursue my course; or when the wintry blast
 Sings o'er the heath, or autumn browns the shade,
 Or spring returns the face of heaven to cheer:
 Ah! not in vain my ardent vows be paid,
 And may your ripening honours, full display'd,
 The dearest guerdon to your votary bear,
 For many a toilsome day, and many a patient year.

ANENT DIDSBURY CHURCH-YARD.

'I like that ancient Saxon phrase, which calls
 The burial-ground God's Acre! It is just:
 It consecrates each grave within its walls,
 And breathes a benison o'er the sleeping dust.'

Longfellow.

Being, some time back, on a leisurely visit to the village of Northenden, a short return stage brought me to Didsbury, where I strolled through the sloping church-yard, and looked for the grave of JAMES WATSON, more generally known as the Little Doctor. I did not find it, although I read the inscriptions upon every tomb and stone.

In the intervals of a sedentary business, I have frequently been a lingerer in lonely places of interment, and while so engaged one thought has often recurred to me. Where lie the vanished forms I have known, or felt interested in, of whom no trace can now be found? The answer is painfully clear: they are lost in unlettered mounds, their names being utterly extinguished by poverty and neglect. If—as the proverb avers—money be the root of evil, it is also the source of good, and in death, as in life, there is no satisfaction without it. Let us, therefore, leave behind sufficient of the 'yellow dross' to purchase a lettered stone, or the future gleaner may search for our graves and fail to find them, as I failed to discover the Doctor's. An incident illustrative of these remarks is deserving of passing record. In Blackley church-yard stands a monument composed of a pedestal and pillar of unusually large size. It was erected at the cost of Mr. John Wallis, an extensive timber merchant of Manchester, to the memory of his wife. The broken top of the column expresses more than its rearer dreamed of, symboling not alone his

lady's severed life, but likewise his own shattered fortune. Gradually his riches took wing; and when, a few years later, he was laid, a ruined man, by his partner's side, there was no one to pay for the simple cutting of his name on the stone. The costly monument towers above his nameless dust—a mockery and a moral.

In his day James Watson was quite a celebrity in this district, especially in the theatrical line. He made his exit from the stage of life shortly after I made my debut. His *Scraps, Raps, and Rhapsodies*, were collected at his death, and published under the title of the *Spirit of the Doctor*. The book is prefaced by a short memoir, and by a portrait of Mr. Watson taken at the age of thirty; which portrait, we are told, was printed from stone, at Ridge Field, in August, 1820. The picture is a rough specimen of the art of lithography, and its expression, for a sparkling wit, is singularly heavy. These literary remains were edited by David William Paynter, who was, like his deceased friend, a witty rhymers.

James Watson was the son of an apothecary, and was born in Booth Street, Manchester, in 1775. He came into the world, it appears, with a constitutional indolence,—a natural love of ease,—that prevented him from liking work of any kind. He preferred the jingle of verse to the chimes of the pestle and mortar; which was a foolish preference, as he afterwards found to his cost; for many persons will take pills, and pay nobly for them too, who will not take poems, at any figure. He grew violently enamoured of the drama, became a leading man among private theatricals, and formed a boon companionship with the eminent tragedian, George

Frederick Cooke. Towards the close of 1803 the Doctor commenced a weekly Stage Review, under the title of the Townsman, a periodical that won its way to a rapid circulation. In 1804 and 1805 he selected the materials for Mr. Cowdroy's Gleaner; or Entertainment for the Fireside. This favourite compilation was published in twenty-four numbers, octavo, price sixpence each, and had an uncommonly extensive sale. Stray volumes of the Gleaner may still be found in our neighbouring homes and circulating libraries, their worn condition affording evidence of long and active service.

Prior to 1809 he seems to have lost his mother by death; in that year her accustomed line, 'Martha Watson, chymist and druggist, 9, Hanging-ditch,' disappeared from the Directory.

During several years Mr. Watson was engaged as Librarian at the Manchester Portico. This was a situation to his taste, and he conducted himself with more regularity than was expected of him. But his former whimsical habits returning, he absented himself so long and so often from the library, that he was ashamed to go back, and another was elected to his post. His next appointment was as Usher (a word I can never write without dreams of Eugene Aram) in a boarding-school at Altrincham, where he repeated the part he played at the Portico. For a long time he was diligent and temperate, until lured to Manchester by some jovial friends who visited him. His absence was prolonged to such an extent that he could not return to the school; and for ever afterwards he was destitute of a home. From this time forth his career was pitiful, reminding one of Kit Marlowe, of

Richard Savage, and of Philip Massinger, who lived and died 'a stranger.' His nights were passed on chairs or benches, or in the streets. Often he climbed over the palisades of St. Peter's church, to sleep on the steps beneath its portico. His days were spent chiefly in tavern company, where, though starving, he was the same merry wag as formerly; for with him to speak was to be witty. During these years of wretched dependance he occasionally employed himself in forming scrap-books, which he readily sold among his friends. He also contributed to sundry weekly journals, being principally concerned in the Manchester Magazine, issued in 1815 and 1816. A taste of James Watson's quality as a rhyme-ster and wit, may prove acceptable to the reader.

IMPROMPTU.

An Esculapian, vamping pills,
 To ease a suffering patient's ills,
 Was thus accosted—'Who's to take 'em?
 Throw physic to the Dogs, say I!
 'That's what I mean;' was the reply;
 "'Tis for a *puppy* that I make 'em!

Without any other passport than his wit, it was the Doctor's custom to wander to different villages in the neighbourhood of Manchester, for the purpose of visiting such of his friends as he promised himself would hang out the banner of welcome. His final ramble was to Didsbury, where, on the morning of Saturday, the twenty-fourth of June, 1820, he was drowned in the river Mersey. His body was not discovered until the twenty-eighth of the same month; on the evening of which day it was privately interred, under the direction of two gentlemen who generously defrayed all ex-

penses. One of these gentlemen purposed having a stone placed over the remains, but his own death prevented the execution of his design.

So here, within one of the nameless graves of Didsbury church-yard, poor Watson has lain during thirty-nine years. Yet he has rested well notwithstanding, without once hungering for a dinner, or sitting, an unwelcome guest, at another man's table. But his memory has mouldered with his bones, until he is now scarcely recollected hereabouts. I therefore endeavour to brush away, with my quill, a little of the sand which Time has shaken from his hour-glass on the Doctor's name. This is a pleasure, perhaps a duty; for if I do not make the attempt, it seems no one else will: at least, no effort has been made in that direction, since the appearance of an interesting article on his life and writings in the Manchester Guardian of 1841.

In the course of the year just referred to, the literary readers of the Guardian were attracted by a series of papers on the Manchester poets and rhymesters, emanating from the practiced pen of Mr. John Harland. Those papers immediately preceded—possibly suggested—the literary gatherings at the Sun Inn; gatherings which I shall have the pleasure of describing anon. One of the writers passed in review by Mr. Harland, biographically and critically, was David William Paynter. The analysis was unfavourable to Mr. Paynter. But the reviewer's pen-picture, though strictly conscientious and mainly correct, was too dark; much resembling a photograph taken on a cloudy day. A few relieving lights were accidentally omitted.

DAVID WILLIAM PAYNTER was born in 1791. He was the eldest son of Richard Walter Paynter, attorney of this city, who followed his profession lucratively through a series of years, and died suddenly on the twenty-second of February, 1811, aged fifty-eight. David received a classical education at the Manchester Grammar School, under Mr. Charles Lawson. He was intended for the medical profession, but never took his degrees. He early showed a partiality for poetry and the drama. Literature became his master passion. His most intimate friend was James Watson, the clever, reckless disciple of Galen, who, like himself, threw physic to the dogs in true Shakesperian style; instead of selling it duly labelled, for the benefit of suffering humanity, at the legal rate of two shillings for each four-inch bottle. This friendship proved life-long, and doubtless strengthened the bias of Paynter's mind. Watson was sixteen years the senior. In the magazines and newspapers of their day they frequently figured as Uncle Toby and Corporal Trim.

In 1818 appeared his *History and Adventures of Godfrey Ranger*; in three volumes. This was his maiden work, and consisted of a series of exploits, chiefly juvenile, written in a free and easy style, after the manner of *Gil Blas*, or *Roderick Random*. In the same year he became a Benedict. He next turned his attention to writing for the stage, no doubt concluding with *Hamlet*, that the play was the precise thing. In 1816 he produced a tragedy, entitled, *Eurypilus; King of Sicily*. In 1819 was published his *Muse in Idleness*; a collection of miscellaneous poems. This was the ill-starred volume that brought down the distant thunder of Blackwood. The critic's bitter, but, for *Maga*, not very brilliant banter,

assailed both book and author ; then taking a more extended range, ridiculed Manchester and all its poetry, past, present, and to come.

In 1820 Paynter edited the literary remains of his eccentric and unfortunate friend Watson. He appended to the same volume a selection of his own fugitive pieces, in prose and verse, under the title of *The Humors of Trim*. Several letters inserted in that appendix give evidence of his fortunes having fallen. Those letters were written in the northern division of our county palatine, where Mr. Paynter was involuntarily performing the part of the Poor Gentleman, and where he had for his theatre the elevated stronghold of John o'Gaunt. He hints some reasons for his reverses, but does not enter into particulars. Possibly the public were slow to purchase his volumes, and the expenses of publication pressed on him too heavily. It is probable that his money had sunk gradually in unsold stock ; which it might reasonably do, as surely though not so swiftly as a brave ship sinks in the Goodwin. We may easily imagine piles of prose loading his shelves, heaps of poetry filling his boxes, and there taking their unbroken Rip Van Winkle slumber—for twenty years, or longer—until the appreciative voice of posterity might arouse them from their lethargy. More poetic than politic we may safely pronounce the author to have been, who thus allowed his substance to melt into shadows. Now that Time has drawn aside the veil, we can see the author's course was destructive, and that his persevering in it was folly. But to him his future was doubtless strewn with flowers and paved with gold, each new venture being hopefully chartered to retrieve the losses of its fore-

runner. When in one year he led his bride to the altar and his first manuscript to the press, could any prospect open fairer to the gaze of a young enthusiast?

For more reasons than one, Trim's first epistle from his historic retreat is worthy of being revived. It is a favourable specimen of his literary style; it contains various local allusions; and shows us that Trim could be as jolly as Mark Tapley under creditable circumstances, and as calmly determined as Barnaby's raven, to never say die.

'Dear Doctor,

This I address to you from John o'Gaunt's Tower, now dedicated as a temple to genius and philosophy, and sometimes vulgarly called Lancaster Castle; into which place I have been driven by many losses, more follies, some neglect, and a smattering of cross providence, which has attended my steps, with more peculiar assiduity, during the last two years. Nevertheless, I can look back on the past scenes of my life, which are strongly chequered with good and evil, happiness and disquietude, without any painful emotions of remorse, which only serve to feed melancholy, and nurse despondence.

'Life's a jest, and all things show it;

I thought so once, but now I know it.'

Too much care cankers the soul, and incessant labour undermines the stoutest constitution. So, too much study corrodes the mind, and destroys its best energies; as rust and mould destroy the finest polish: for which causes, it is my practice to dissipate care, and soften labour, by reasonable recreation; and, above all things, never to sit brooding too long on subjects of deep reflection, or indulge the mind, when it invites to murky melancholy.

The natural order of things in this sublunary world, though fixed in principle, is subject to constant change; for which reason, riches, honours, health, strength, and life itself, are as uncertain as the winds, and as unstable as the waves.

Wherefore, man is never so truly happy as he thinks himself, or half so miserable as he sometimes believes—for no one knows what the morrow may bring forth. Then why should foolish, fretful man, under the hourly chance and change of fortune, (which he can neither command nor avert) surrender himself a willing victim to despair. Believe me, dear Sir, that in the midst of my misfortunes, and the plenitude of my late perplexity, I have never been forsaken of hope; as I am confident that the resources of my future happiness and prosperity are within myself, under an ever-ruling Providence. Thus hope is the undeviating consolation of my mind, and the sheet-anchor of my soul. In the school of adversity men learn wisdom; and though a soldier finds little rest in the field of battle, he always meets with experience, which teaches him how to encounter danger, and overcome his next foe with greater advantage. [In thus philosophically preparing for defeat, Trim proved himself wiser in his generation than the great Napoleon, who thought only of victory.]

Since my arrival here, my health has been daily improving; my nerves are grown strong and steady; and my habits of life, as well as my thoughts of mankind in general, quite changed. On my return to Manchester you will find me an altered man; and, I hope, for the better; and surely it is making a right use of the understanding, to turn past misfortunes to future advantage. We have an old proverb, that 'good is frequently derived from evil,' which I choose to quote on the present occasion, because I deem it not altogether inapplicable.

Now and then, I get a scrap of news from Manchester, which is sometimes flattering to my pride, and congenial to my feelings;—at other times, tinctured with gall; but the tongues of malicious babblers are always busy with the secret history, as well as public reputation, of a fallen character. Such have my pity only; for they cannot provoke my anger. Few men who have moved or mixed in public life are without enemies; and though I am confident that I am not without, yet, I flatter myself, I have at least some friends left, with whom I hope again to enjoy 'the feast of reason and the flow of soul.'

In this college of practical philosophy, I have leisure to reflect and moralise on the past follies of life, and to lay the plans of future action, with deliberation and discretion. Here I am neither tortured by anxiety, nor fretted by impatience; save what I feel (and naturally feel,) for an affectionate partner; whose virtues and constancy have rendered her doubly dear to me,—and whose future happiness shall be the first object of my thoughts, and the last care of my life.

With a mind constituted like mine the gloom of a prison may be endured without melancholy, and the restraints of a jail sustained without impatience. Could you see me in some of my most serious and most happy moments—'like Patience on a monument, smiling at Grief'—you would envy my serenity.

Since my arrival here I have acquired three fresh ideas of a jail, which may be compared to a pinfold—a pawnbroker's shop—or the king's dry-dock at Liverpool. First, a pinfold is a place where wanton animals are lodged and detained, until satisfaction be made for damage and trespass committed—so is a jail. Secondly, a pawnbroker takes in goods as a jailer takes in bodies, subject to redemption. And lastly, a dry-dock is a place where leaky hulls are laid up for repair—and so is a prison.

During the late 'public impeachment' which I maintained single-handed for several months, without consulting or advising with any one, and without personal animosity, or peculiar interest, save what was due to my own feelings and character as a man, I frequently received the ephemeral applause of the public in general; but to this hour I have never been indemnified for the heavy expenses I sustained, independently of the labour I bestowed in exposing local abuses, and civilising certain subordinate officers, set in authority over the inhabitants. So much for the liberality of a Manchester public, whose gratitude is not unlike a mid-summer frost, which is generally short, and always unprofitable. After this experience I should be worse than a fool to continue a contest in which I can hope to find nothing but labour and cost, without recompense or indemnity.

Well, well, let the world will and wag as it may, there yet remain a few choice spirits in Mancunium, who now and

then pathetically mutter, 'Alas! poor Corporal,'—whilst others, with hearts as hard and obdurate as a cobbler's lap-stone, exultingly exclaim—

'Where he's gone, or how he fares,
Nobody knows, and nobody cares.'

So now, to every friend and every foe, be peace and plenty—concord and charity. Meanwhile, believe me to remain—*semper eadem*—and unalterably, dear Doctor, your faithful friend, but wanton servant.

CORPORAL TRIM.

Columbary of St. George,
Lancaster, 14th of June, 1819.'

In 1822 appeared Mr. Paynter's best known work, *King Stephen, or the Battle of Lincoln*: an historical tragedy, in five acts. With an introductory narrative. This narrative tells the interesting but painful story of an unsuccessful dramatic writer. *King Stephen* was written, as the author states, in the autumn of 1817, and shortly after its completion handed to Mr. Edmund Kean. During three months the player took no notice of the play; the author then wrote a reminder, but to no purpose. After a few more months and a few more letters had passed, Mr. Kean pronounced the tragedy unfit for presentation, and returned the manuscript. One month afterwards *King Stephen* and *Eurypilus* were jointly transmitted to Mr. Dimond, author of the *Foundling of the Forest*, and manager of the Bath theatre. The arrival of the plays was promptly acknowledged, and they were declared to be 'productions' of superior ability. Mr. Dimond, however, was called on business to France, and the matter lay in abeyance nearly half-a-year. On the manager's return he suggested some alterations in *King Stephen*, and made preparations for bringing out that play on his own stage. He

applied for a favourite London actress, but failed to secure her services. This misfortune was pursued by another; his principal tragedian declined to take the part of the hero. Being thus thwarted, Mr. Dimond withdrew regretfully from the contest. The tragedy was next carefully revised,—a new scene written,—another wholly retrenched,—a third remodelled—and some few passages expunged. Thus adapted for representation, it was forwarded to Mr. Harris, patentee of Covent Garden theatre. Three notes of enquiry followed from the author before the patentee deigned a reply. At length, after the lapse of ten or twelve weeks, he wrote to the effect that he could find no trace of the play; but if Mr. Paynter would oblige him with another copy, it should receive his attention. Our dramatist admits he was reduced to a provoking dilemma; but in the course of a week he completed a fair duplicate of the tragedy, and sent it, with a corrected copy of Eurypilus. Mr. Harris quickly read, and returned them. He was much gratified, he affirmed, with the poetical beauties displayed in King Stephen, but did not think either of the pieces would succeed on the stage. The next offer of the last-named play was made to Mr. T. A. Ward, directing manager of the Theatre Royal, Manchester. On the eighteenth of June, 1819, the manuscript was formally sent for his inspection; and, early the following day, was as formally returned, unopened. Mr. Ward observed, in a note, that the bringing out of a new drama, unsanctioned by a London audience, had ever been a drawback to the interests of the theatre: that his partners and himself had therefore come to the resolution of declining all such favours in future. Towards the middle of the ensuing August, Mr. Paynter's

'dramatic unfortunates' were gratuitously offered to Mr. R. W. Elliston, lessee of Drury Lane theatre. This proposal was as unprosperous in its issue as his former offers had been. Mr. Elliston mortified him with procrastination until the fifth of November; on which day the manuscript of King Stephen was separately returned. Eurypilus was never restored.

Mr. Paynter says he began to reflect seriously on the redeemless waste of time, and unavailing suspense, which these efforts occasioned, and he resolved to pursue them no farther. Had he not read the story of Bruce and the spider,—of Palissy, the Potter—and been otherwise impressed with the value of perseverance, he would hardly have pursued them thus far. The manuscript was consigned, like *Waverley*, to a drawer, where it remained neglected until the autumn of 1821; when some literary friends advised him to collect a company of performers, and produce his tragedy at the Minor theatre, Spring Gardens. This advice he carried into effect; and in so doing gave an instance of indomitable perseverance, and fondness for the pursuit to which he had attached himself, worthy of better fortune. His *royal outcast* was performed on the fifth of December, 1821. Notwithstanding bad scenery, heterogeneous costume, and some unstudied actors, the play was, it appears, very favourably received. So there is reason for supposing King Stephen would have proved a success, if it had been brought out under Theatre Royal auspices.

In the year following that enterprise Mr. Paynter's health gave way. His devotion to study engendered a pulmonary complaint, which caused him extreme pain during the last

few months of his existence. He died on the fourteenth of March, 1823, aged thirty-two years; and was interred in the family grave at Blackley church-yard. The inscription on the gravestone shows that his eldest daughter survived him only eight days. Towards the close of the same year appeared the *Wife of Florence*; a tragedy: the last work of its author. It was published by subscription, for the benefit of his widow and children. Of these children one son has recently emigrated to Australia, while another—the youngest and his father's namesake—is at present engaged in a mercantile house in Manchester. So if the poet failed to perpetuate his name in one way, he has succeeded in another; which brings to mind a sentiment, at once beautiful and consolatory, expressed by an English bard of the last century:—

‘And when with envy Time, transported,
Shall think to rob us of our joys,
You'll in your girls again be courted,
And I'll go wooing in my boys.’

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THE GRAVE OF HENRY LIVERSEEGE.

IN a company of poets an artist must ever prove a welcome guest, for poetry and painting are kindred emanations of the same beautiful Ideal. Prelude or apology is therefore needless in describing a search for the resting-place of

*Henry Liversidge.*

On recently passing by the homely church of St. Luke, in Chorlton-upon-Medlock, I remembered (as I had often remembered before) that Henry Liversidge lay somewhere within its precincts, in a sadly-neglected grave. Curious to know the precise spot, I endeavoured to enter the yard by the front gates, but these are now closed against the public, except during divine service. The graves may nevertheless be reached by a more private entrance, passing along the gable-end of the adjoining school. Upon gaining admission,

I was informed that another enthusiast had lately been there on the same errand, and that his search had been a vain one. Determined to succeed, if possible, I proceeded carefully over many stones, removing, in not a few instances, the soil that covered the lettering. Treeless, flowerless, grassless, and completely walled in, the dead seemed here imprisoned, rather than buried. The dulness of a damp wintry day hung over them. The scene was indeed cheerless. Not a twig whereon a robin might perch while chirruping his snow song; not a headstone, sunken and lichen-crowned, over which an urchin might leap in thoughtless frolic; no porch, or tapering spire, to draw a lover of the picturesque from his beaten track. It is well for the memory of Liverseege that he cut his name conspicuously in his works, for it is but poorly cut upon his gravestone, being compressed in small characters at the foot of a lengthy list of relatives. In the church register his burial is more explicitly recorded: 'Henry Liverseege, single man; abode, Gore Street, Piccadilly; buried 19th January, 1832; age, 29 years.' Mr. Swain, in his memoir of the artist, correctly states that a plain slab gives just the name and age of the deceased. Probably the inscription was originally short in consequence of a monument being projected. This supposition is strengthened by the fact that, in 1835, Mr. Swain issued an eloquent appeal for some memorial to his famous friend; which appeal was supported by the powerful pen of the editor of the *Manchester and Salford Advertiser*. 'Liverseege,' wrote Mr. Condy, 'toiled for bread and still more for fame, when most men in his circumstances would have abandoned all exertion. One certainty consoled him, as he wrestled with death for the shortest respite, in order to put the finishing stroke to his works. To come up from the poorest ranks, whose toil he would have shared, but for his constitutional feebleness, to combat poverty and insignificance, and to arrive, untutored and unaided, at that purity of style, that truth to nature, that display of lively and harmless humour which abound in his pictures, was a great deal; but it was greater to satisfy his own rigorous self-criticism, and to die with the consciousness of having secured to himself a memory of enduring fame.' These efforts were aided, or rather preceded, by Miss Jewsbury, in her well-known Dirge for a Dead



Painter, and also in an account of the artist's career and death, which she wrote for the Athenæum. The warm impulsive heart of the poetess was the first to express its sorrow in words. Perhaps she saw the dark shadow on her own path, and felt she had no time for delay.

Of our early-lost artist some interesting particulars are afforded by Mr. George Richardson, in the preface to his volume entitled *Patriotism: and other Poems*; published in this city in 1844. While writing of his own youthful days, Mr. Richardson thus incidentally observes: 'The highly-gifted but fragile and afflicted Henry Liverseege (who was of an extremely kind and communicative disposition), gave almost nightly instruction to the writer and a fellow student in art, who resided in Bradford Road, within a door, indeed, of the painter's contemporary and biographer, Charles Swain, Esq. Liverseege, at this juncture of his history, was painting portraits in oil, and occupying a room in the mill of his uncle, Mr. Green, Canal Street. The author frequently read with and for him Shakspeare; often recurring to Henry IV., with the second part of which he was always much delighted, and from which he frequently made sketches with great spirit and facility, which the writer now deeply regrets not having preserved. Liverseege subsequently, but only for a short period, painted miniatures on ivory, in which branch of art he was signally fortunate. A few years after this, Liverseege went to London, at the instance of his uncle; was introduced to Sir Thomas Lawrence; and became intimate with Etty and other academicians. Any comment subsequent to this, touching his rapid progress, favour, and excellence, would be superfluous.'

Reverting to the neglected grave, and judging by the numerous instances before us, it would seem that twenty or thirty years are requisite to congeal the tears of mourning friends and admirers into grateful stone or marble. So there is yet hope for Henry Liverseege: his turn may be anticipated shortly. A large monument is scarcely desirable, but his grave will look all the better when surmounted by a chaste and simple memorial, unobtrusive as the painter it is designed to commemorate. The late Gabriel Tinto suggested a granite slab, affixed to the wall of the church, as being an appropriate and most economical remembrancer.

Men of kindred taste and feeling will surely see to this at some early day: better late than never. Let each local artist consider himself invited to contribute a drawing, or picture; each local author to give an original piece, or copy of his book. Let these free-will offerings be displayed for sale or lottery, in a Fine Art Gallery, or other room lent for the purpose; and from the generous proceeds thereof may arise the Liverseege monument. On this hint they must, however, act quickly, or some connoisseur of art, finding how few, how very few pounds will serve to render a graceful though tardy tribute to native genius, and how cheaply he may link his own name with that of his favourite artist, will assuredly wrest the honour from their hands.

Even in his comparative isolation, Liverseege is not entirely deserted. Two or three painters of the locality, with now and then a stray poet (men far richer in sympathy than in sovereigns), turn aside to linger with the master spirit, and to wonder if their names will become as lofty while their graves remain as lowly, as his.

It is painful to be called abruptly from this pleasing fact, to record the premature decease of one of these genial sympathisers—Mr. Anthony, so favourably known under his *nom de plume* of Gabriel Tinto. This promising artist and accomplished art critic was one of the executors of Liverseege, and now lies within view of his friend's resting-place. The lingerer in All Saints' churchyard may con, if he list, this brief epitaph:

Sacred  
to the Memory of  
George Wilfred Anthony,  
who departed this life Novr. 14th, 1859,  
aged 49 years.

A summer visit to St. Luke's has revealed a pleasant change in its aspect. The yard has been thoroughly renovated, and young trees are putting forth their leaves and extending their branches. Though still flowerless, bright spots of green diversify the brown earth and lettered stones; the high wall has been displaced by a lower one, surmounted by light palisades; and altogether the place seems as if some affectionate fairy was smoothing the way for the coming memorial, which will be agreeably visible from the public thoroughfare.

MISS JEWSBURY (the M. J. J. of the *Annuals*) and Mrs. Hemans were contemporary writers and bosom friends. Of Felicia Hemans—our queen of song—nothing need be here written. The incidents of her brilliant yet sorrowful career, from her birth at Liverpool, September twenty-fifth, 1793, to her burial in St. Anne's Church, Dublin, in May, 1835, will be found duly recorded in the edition of her life and poems edited by her younger sister, Mrs. Hicks Owen, and in the memorials of the poetess by Mr. Henry F. Chorley. The fame of Maria Jane Jewsbury has been less tenderly guarded,—her name less frequently heralded to the world. There is no collective edition of her works, or volume of literary remains, interesting and valuable as those remains must be. Yet within a narrower circle than her friend commands, her worth is still remembered, and her genius acknowledged. That she possessed richness of fancy, glowing colours, and a charming flow of melody, one specimen from her pen will suffice to prove.

## TO AN ABSENT ONE.\*

Summer is with us in its pomp and power,  
 Placing the green crown on the forest trees ;  
 And woodland music, like a gushing shower  
 Mingled with flower-scents, floats upon the breeze ;  
 Summer is with us, brightening every brow,  
 And thrilling every heart, but where art thou ?  
 Thou being form'd of love, and song, and smiles,  
 Link'd by thy genius to the stars of heaven,  
 Yet link'd again by woman's gentle wiles,  
 To lowlier blessings that to earth are given ;  
 The tremulous blossom, the sweet-laden bee,  
 And the lone streamlet—they too emblem thee.

\* Addressed to Mrs. Hemans.

Thou shouldst be with us when the sun descending  
 Walks to his rest along a path of gold,  
 When o'er the hills triumphantly are blending  
 Colours that mock the Tyrian dyes of old ;  
 Thou shouldst be with us when the dews of morn  
 String their bright pearls upon the slender corn :—

With us at noontide in some grassy lair,  
 Hid in its green depths, like a folded flower,  
 The rustic meal with merry heart to share,  
 Far from the grave restraints of courtlier bower ;  
 With us to wake the smile and prompt the song,  
 Wing the sad hour, the pleasant one prolong.

Come to us, bright one—sunbeam of the heart !  
 There rests a shadow on our souls till then ;  
 But come, and fresh flowers in our path will start,  
 And joyous greetings ring through grove and glen :  
 Come back and listen to affection's vow,  
 And the glad household-welcome—' Here art thou !'

The Athenæum of 1834 is enriched with a lengthy extract, of abiding interest and value, from a private letter written by Miss Jewsbury (then Mrs. Fletcher) dated but a short time before she left England. As the communication tells the history of her mind in her own words, I take the liberty of reprinting it entire :

'The passion for literary distinction consumed me from nine years old. I had no advantages—great obstacles—and now, when from disgust, I cannot write a line to please myself, I look back with regret to the days when facility and audacity went hand in hand. I wish in vain for the simplicity that neither dreaded criticism nor knew fear. Intense labour has in some measure, supplied the deficiencies of early idleness and commonplace instruction : intercourse with those who were once distant and bright as the stars, has become a thing of course. I have not been unsuccessful in my

own career. But the period of timidity and of sadness is come now, and with my foot on the threshold of a new life and a new world,

I could lie down like a tired child,  
And weep away this life of care.

I can bear blame if seriously given, and accompanied by that general justice which I feel due to me; banter is that which I *cannot* bear, and the prevalence of which in passing criticism, and the dread of which in my own person, greatly contribute to my determination of letting many years elapse before I write another book. Unfortunately, I was twenty-one before I became a reader, and I became a writer almost as soon; it is the ruin of all the young talent of the day, that reading and writing are simultaneous. We do not educate ourselves for literary enterprise. Some never awake to the consciousness of the better things neglected; and if one like myself is at last seized upon by a blended passion for knowledge and for truth, he has probably committed himself by a series of jejune efforts—the standard of inferiority is erected, and the curse of mere cleverness clings to his name. I would gladly burn *almost* everything I ever wrote, if so be that I might start now with a mind that has seen, read, thought, and suffered, somewhat at least approaching to a preparation. Alas! alas! we all sacrifice the palm-tree to obtain the temporary draught of wine! We slay the camel that would bear us through the desert, because we will not endure a momentary thirst. I have done nothing to live, and what I have yet done must pass away with a thousand other blossoms, the growth, the beauty, and the oblivion of a day. The powers which I feel, and of which I have given promise, *may* mature—*may* stamp themselves in act; but the spirit of despondency is strong upon the future exile, and I fear they never will—

I feel the long grass growing o'er my heart.

My 'Three Histories' have most of myself in them, but they are fragmentary. Public report has fastened the 'Julia' upon me; the childhood, the opening years, and many of the

after *opinions* are correct; but all else is fabulous. In the best of everything I have done, you will find one leading idea—*Death*: the thoughts, the images, all contrasts of thoughts and images, are derived from living much in the valley of that shadow. My poetry, except some half dozen pieces, may be consigned to oblivion; but in all you would find the sober hue, which, to my mind's eye, blends equally with the golden glow of sunset and the bright green of Spring—and is seen equally in the 'temple of delight' as in the tomb of decay and separation. I am melancholy by nature, cheerful on principle.'

'We can add little' says the editor of the Athenæum, 'to these interesting confessions of one whose sincerity could well be relied upon. In conversation Mrs. Fletcher was brilliant and eloquent: she was active in serving others as well as herself—and we feel as we record her untimely death, that a friend has been taken away from us, as well as a bright ornament from the female literature of this country.'

Miss Jewsbury was married on the first of August, 1832, at Penegoes, Montgomeryshire, to the Rev. W. K. Fletcher, one of the chaplains to the East India Company. In fourteen months afterwards came the close of her brief career, which was well-nigh as mournful as that of her sister-songstress L. E. L. Each left England for a tropical climate shortly after her marriage, and each perished in the land of her adoption almost immediately upon her arrival. While on her passage from Sholapore to Bombay, Mrs. Fletcher was seized with Asiatic cholera, and died on the third of October, 1833.

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GEORGE CONDY, barrister-at-law, and many years editor of the Manchester and Salford Advertiser, was one of the ornaments of our fourth estate. With the accomplishments of a scholar, and the brilliancy of an acute though genial

critic, he possessed also the editor's best friend—a ready reliable pen, equal to any emergency, however pressing. As Talleyrand was independent of sleep, so was Mr. Condy independent of study. Countless evenings passed by ordinary editors in tedious preparation, were spent by him in mirthful society. On hastening to his office at the eleventh hour, he would dash off sheet upon sheet of urgent copy, with an alacrity and correctness that probably astonished himself as well as amazed his printer's devil. Many of those spontaneous articles, if collected in author fashion, and bound in volumes, would have preserved Mr. Condy's name as a literary genius. But his happiest efforts are buried, without hope of resurrection, in the columns of a dead newspaper; while his individuality is lost beneath the veil imposed by the important yet bewildering 'We.' John Keats was not alone in his sorrow when he lamented that his name was written in water, or chiselled in sand; for such fate awaits every newspaper editor, in his editorial capacity.

Various pamphlets emanated from Mr. Condy's pen, the subjects being Reform, the Factory System, Malibran and Music. In 1837 he published a closet play, in five acts, entitled *Camillus*. From this now scarce production may be given a liberal extract, which will be equal to giving a solitary flower as a specimen of a nosegay. Mr. Condy's talents were so varied, that nothing less than a variety of extracts could adequately represent his mind.

#### THE ROMAN MATRON.

*Flavia.*

Is not my husband exiled?

Did not I see him forth the city gates—

Did not I see his brawny chest convulsed

With sobs—his cheeks, hardened in fields of war,  
 Drenched all with childish tears—while parting vows  
 Plighted with more than death's solemnity,  
 Put off the renovation of our loves,  
 Till we encounter where no spoiler comes,  
 Nor impious hate disturbs, nor murderous feud,  
 In the Elysian fields?

*Cornelius.*

Your tone, dear sister,

Is much too sorrowful.

*Fla.*

Why awakened you

Its perturbations? Well you know my mood—  
 Well do you know our wrongs—how merited,  
 And worst, how cureless! Let but ill alone,  
 I have my husband's patience. But you rouse  
 The wife and mother, both, to arms, against  
 Your foul and dastardly injustice.

*Cor.*

Comfort!

There is yet hope for you of happiness,  
 For Rome of rescue. The senate has annulled  
 The sentence of Camillus, and drawn out  
 His third commission of dictatorship.

*Fla.* A lively hope! These are your succours, are they?  
 And who's to serve it on him? Where will he  
 Be found? and, when discovered, where I pray,  
 Will he find men, an armoury, and treasure?  
 Pr'ythee more sense, or silence.

*Cor.*

You're too swift,

And strive to elude good fortune, when she seeks you.  
 The truth is here. Your husband and the Ardeates  
 Beat up the farther Gaulish camp at midnight,  
 And made great slaughter. One has been with us,  
 Who scaled the wall from Tiber, and informs us,  
 Our scattered citizens have gathered force,  
 And for this enterprise were eager rivals—  
 But your Camillus would not lead them on.

*Fla.* That cannot be—I know his loyalty,  
 And how he rates his duty above resentment—  
 That must be false.



*Cor.* You give the very reason,  
 Why it must be true. His loyalty it was  
 That curbed his daring spirit. He preferred  
 The law that banished him, to fortune's favour  
 And certain victory. Was not that great, think you?

*Fla.* I must not shout his praises—he's my husband—  
 Crown of my life—his honour is my portion,  
 Jointure and dower. To you, Sir, I may own it,  
 He still outnumbered all my better hopes  
 Of augmentation in its riches' increase.  
 Well, I am sad no more. 'Tis Brennus' turn  
 To groan and look about him for a grave.  
 I know not where Camillus will be found.  
 But I do know, if he can lift his arm,  
 He'll make sad work among the muddled heads  
 Beneath the Gaulish casques. For never yet  
 Did he put armour on, and the foe prosper.  
 His helmet's glare is deadly as the Gorgon.  
 Off with your mourning, boy—we must prepare  
 To meet your father.

*Lucius.* When will he be here?

*Fla.* What time 'twill take to move from Ardea hither.  
 The Gauls will be no hindrance to his march—  
 In a day or two at furthest. Titia,

*Enter Titia.*

Get out my robes, and trim me spousal garlands.  
 Gape not, but do it—I'm to be married, girl.  
 Lo! saffron-vested Hymen smiles upon me.

*Titia.* Married, madam!

*Fla.* Yes, married—and why not?  
 Am I too old? Camillus will not think so.  
 He rises from the tomb of civil death,  
 Immortal splendours beaming from his brows,  
 Bushed out with victor wreaths, and, in his hand,  
 The pledge of Rome's deliverance, his good sword.  
 Summon the neighbour matrons and their daughters.

Mr. Condy died, after a lingering illness, in his fifty-second year, and was interred in All Saints' church-yard, Chorlton-upon-Medlock. There is nothing to distinguish his grave from the nameless crowd, although it was the expressed intention of his numerous friends to have a monument erected over him. On its top was to be placed a Latin inscription, of which a rough translation is subjoined:—

Here are interred  
 All the mortal remains of  
 GEORGE CONDY, Esq.,  
 A well-known and learned counsellor.  
 Sprung from a good family, he was born in Ireland,  
 And for fifteen years, honoured and beloved,  
 He lived in Manchester,  
 Where dying  
 Nov. 4th, 1841, aged 51 years,  
 He left great regret among all classes for his loss.

This is not the first instance by many in which generous intentions towards the departed have resulted in nothingness: neither will it prove to be the last. Our attention is so much absorbed by people moving around us, that we are apt to forget those whom the earth has covered. The demands of the living are so imperative, that the gentle reminders of the dead too often pass unregarded; until their claims become barred, as it were, by the Statute of Limitation. A simple headstone, promptly reared, is preferable to all the fine monuments ever projected and promised—but never built.

I have the partiality of a first affection for the editor of the Advertiser. It was in his pages that I emerged from the chrysalis state of manuscript into the glory of full-blown print. Fired with my successful beginning, I tilted my

Pegasus in all directions, as wildly and as wisely as Quixote tilted at the windmill. My vernal effusions were inflicted upon most newspapers and magazines of the district, many an editorial sanctum sanctorum being doubtless illuminated at my expense. A rhyming Robin Hood, I was continually aiming at the poets' corner; and although I frequently missed my mark, now and then the target was pierced, much to my satisfaction. Restless with anxiety as to the fate of my contributions, I have often heard old James Williams (an amiable character, and the patriarch of local news carriers,) pushing the Advertiser underneath our door, so early as four o'clock on Saturday mornings. Leaping out of bed at the welcome sound, I have turned the paper to the familiar page, and placed my hand over the poetical department, so that my happiness or misery might be gradually revealed, and not overpower me with its sudden fulness.

To that feverish state of things succeeded a reaction. The storm of Twenty has subsided to a calm at Forty. It is so long since I solicited an editor for a space in his metrical column, that I well-nigh forget both the flattering and the devil-may-care styles of addressing that omnipotent functionary. There is still a sobered interest,—a qualified magnetic influence,—about the region of the poets' corner, which never fails to draw my glance to its contents; but newspapers have now other objects of attraction in addition to original verses; formerly they had not. An appearance in that once magic spot could still be appreciated, but its value would be coolly estimated, and would fail to satisfy. Time ennobles our ambition, or subdues it. 'We must advance or retreat; the earth moves, and so must earth's children,'—even her children of song.

PART II.  
CONTEMPORANEOUS.



POETS' CORNER.

A BRIEF and interesting series of literary meetings made me acquainted with various members of 'our little republic of letters,' who were previously unknown to me except by name. Those poetic soireés were held at the Sun Inn, Long Millgate, Manchester, kept at that time—1842—by Mr. Wm. Earnshaw, a gentleman whose admiration of authors was so warm and genuine that he christened his house the Poets'

Corner. From the preface to the Festive Wreath, a pleasing—and now rare—little volume, edited by Mr. Rogerson, the following apt description of our place of meeting is quoted: ‘Near to the gates of Chetham College stands one of those ancient and picturesque houses, which occasionally start to view like spectres of a bygone age, but are now disappearing before the levelling hand of improvement. In external appearance it presents a singular contrast to the neat uniform aspect of our modern mansions, being clumsily supported by irregular beams, and its walls being composed of clay and plaster. As far back as we have traced its history, it has been, and is at the present day, occupied as an Inn, but we have been unable to ascertain the date of its erection from any available records.’ At this quaint hostel were originated quarterly festivals, with the laudable intention of bringing together our local writers, of making them personally known to each other, and of linking them in a bond of good fellowship. Friends to the poetic literature of Lancashire were likewise invited. Many responded to the call, some accepting the invitation in familiar verse. The stage, too, contributed its quota: Munyard, Bass, and Ly-sander S. Thompson proving as unctuous and jovial in company as upon the boards of the theatre. Munyard, especially, was a true son of Momus, with a bright professional career opening before him. His prospects were, however, soon clouded by domestic affliction, followed by his death, at an early age, in the Summer of 1850. Thompson, also, stalwart Tyke as he was, prematurely died, while on a starring tour among our Transatlantic neighbours. Another member of the same dramatic company, S. W. Butler, was an occasional dropper-

in at the old house, though not, so far as I remember, a frequenter of the literary gatherings. He did not long survive the period of which I write, but passed from amongst us while yet in the prime of life. He was interred in the cemetery at Ardwick Green, his gravestone (placed at a short distance from the tomb of John Dalton) being adorned by a nobly impressive epitaph.

'Here rest the mortal remains of Samuel William Butler, Tragedian. In him the stage lost a highly-gifted and accomplished actor: one on whose tongue the noblest creations of the poet found truthful utterance. After long and severe suffering he departed this life the 17th day of July, in the year of our Lord 1845, aged 41 years.

Whence this ambition—whence this proud desire,  
 This love of fame—this longing to aspire?  
 To gather laurels in their greenest bloom,  
 To honour life, and sanctify the tomb?  
 'Tis the divinity, that never dies,  
 Which prompts the soul of Genius still to rise!  
 Though fade the laurel, leaf by leaf away,  
 The soul hath prescience of a fadeless day!  
 And God's eternal promise, like a star,  
 From faded hopes still points to hopes afar!  
 Where weary hearts for consolation trust,  
 And bliss immortal quickens from the dust.  
 On this Great Hope the painter, actor, bard,  
 And all who ever strove for Fame's reward,  
 Must rest at last! and all that earth have trod,  
 Still need the grace of a forgiving God.'

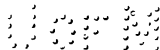
Of our friendly visitors not the least man of mark and merit was Robert Story, then poet and parish clerk of Gargrave, in Craven, now of Somerset House, London. England and her religion have no truer friend, or warmer eulogist, than Mr. Story. It is pleasing to perceive, by recent an-

nouncements, that a collective edition of his works has been brought out in the best manner, under the fostering care of the Duke of Northumberland. In his volume may be found, among other sweet bursts of song, a lover's ballad, which shows Mr. Story's patriotic feeling to be tempered with playful fancy:—

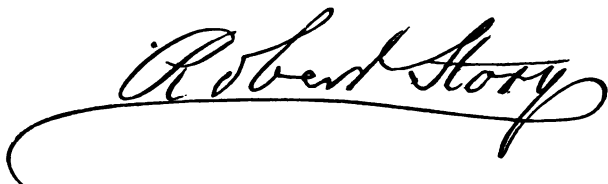
## THE WHISTLE.

- 'You have heard,' said a youth to his sweetheart who stood  
While he sat on a corn-sheaf at daylight's decline,  
'You have heard of the Danish boy's whistle of wood—  
I wish that the Danish boy's whistle were mine!'
- 'And what would you do with it? Tell me!' she said,  
While an arch smile play'd over her beautiful face;  
'I would blow it,' he answered, 'and then my fair maid  
Would fly to my side, and would here take her place.'
- 'Is *that* all you'd blow it for? *That* may be yours  
Without any magic,' the fair maiden cried;  
'A favour so slight one's good nature secures!'  
And she playfully seated herself by his side.
- 'I would blow it again,' said the youth, 'and the charm  
Would work so, that not even Modesty's check  
Would be able to keep from my neck your fine arm!'  
She smiled, and she laid her fine arm round his neck.
- 'Yet once more would I blow, and the music divine  
Would bring me, the third time, an exquisite bliss—  
You would lay your fair cheek to this brown one of mine,  
And your lips, stealing past it, would give me a kiss.'
- The maiden laugh'd out in her innocent glee—  
'What a fool of yourself with the whistle you'd make!  
For only consider how silly 'twould be  
To sit there and whistle for—*what you might take!*'

In addition to his clerkship at Somerset House, Mr. Story is possessed of two estates, both of which are placed in high



latitudes; one of them, as he jocularly asserts, being situated in the Isle of Skye, the other in the shire of Ayr. It is probably in consequence of these estates being so peculiarly Scottish, that the aid of second-sight is essential to their discovery.

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Robert Story". The signature is written in black ink and features a long, sweeping underline that extends to the left and then curves back under the main body of the name.

I retain a pleasant recollection of that brief series of literary festivals. They were novelties in these parts, and were characterized by that hopeful enthusiasm which belongs only to the First. On each occasion there was a numerous gathering of choice spirits; the entertainments being varied and enhanced by music and song, conversation and sentiment. On the opening night our president was Mr. John Dickenson, 'the Mecænas of poets, and binder of books,' who was at that time a gentleman of superior mind and joyous temperament, though now the 'light of other days' has literally and strangely faded from his eyes.

Besides the pleasure of joining each other in company, there was some utility in our plan, as thus propounded by our second president: 'Whilst the members of various trades and professions were in the habit of assembling at stated periods for the purpose of advancing their common interests, and creating kind and reciprocal feelings, it had been considered that periodical meetings of literary men were equally





desirable and beneficial. Such gatherings, he believed, would have a tendency to promote the cause of literature generally, and diffuse amongst its contributors and admirers mutual sympathy and respect.' After the delivery of this address, numerous poetical communications, written expressly for the occasion, were recited or read to the meeting, and subsequently published in the Festive Wreath before mentioned.

The poetical soireés suggested the Lancashire Literary Association, a somewhat ambitious scheme that fell still-born from the brain of the projector. The main object of that intended association, as declared in the prospectus, was the establishment in Manchester of a first-class magazine, one that should live to years of lettered maturity, instead of perishing in infancy as all its predecessors had done. Had the projector of the association possessed the bank of Samuel Rogers (the only sound bank I remember in connection with the poor Republic of Letters), or the private printing presses of Horace Walpole and Sir Egerton Brydges, I verily believe the embryo wonder would have become an accomplished fact; but as neither of those advantages came to its aid the amiable bubble burst, and Manchester still lacks her flourishing magazine.

The reader of these local reminiscences may chance to remember to our disparagement the Mermaid Club, founded by Sir Walter Raleigh, of which Matchless Will and Rare Ben were the shining lights; or he may call to mind the Literary Club originated by Sir Joshua Reynolds, and wedded to renown by Dr. Johnson and simple genial Noll. While vailing our bonnets with due reverence to those associated worthies, we must defend our provincial writers in the

spirit of apology and endearment adopted by Touchstone when defending his Audrey;—though little known to fame, or favoured by fortune, they were at least our own. There is a certain witchery in the name of the Falcon, or the Turk's Head, where the Mermaid and the Literary clubs were held, that our modest hostel the Sun cannot hope to possess, even in neighbouring ears. It may possibly approach something nearer to the region of veneration when its beams have been long enough paled; for age gives a glory to vanished favourites, as it gives a crust to hoarded wine. It has been shrewdly observed by a recent reviewer, that 'readers will never cease to take delight in the past. Our novelists know this; and our playwrights feel the value even of a costume of other days. So much is swallowed up by time, that it is natural for us to hold by that shadow which is left, and prize it.'

In the seventeen years that have elapsed since the inauguration of those poetic soireés many of our associates have been summoned hence, even they who were merriest of heart, and who lent to the festivals their principal charm. When we reflect that of that small band, Thomas Arkell Tidmarsh, Alexander Wilson, Robert Rose, Benjamin Stott, Charles Kenworthy, William Earnshaw, and William Harper are already numbered with the dead, there is food more than sufficient for sorrowful thought, and warning imperative for the living to be friendly while the opportunity is left to them.

The flower first plucked from our garland was THOMAS ARKELL TIDMARSH. In writing of Mr. Tidmarsh a figurative mode of expression is not inappropriate, but is rather

in keeping with one whose experience of life was limited to its bright side, and for whom Love retained the freshness of his first young dream. He died on the thirtieth of July, 1843, being stricken down at a moment's warning, in the twenty-fourth year of his age.

'Our seasons have no fix'd returns,  
Without our will they come and go;  
At noon our sudden summer burns,  
Ere sunset all is snow.

But each day brings less summer cheer,  
Crimps more our ineffectual spring;  
And something earlier every year  
Our singing birds take wing.\*

Mr. Tidmarsh was essentially an amatory poet, and resembled Lord Byron in cherishing a passion for the name of Mary. Most of his lyrics are linked with that feminine appellation. The most lengthy production of his pen—Cupid's Love Draught—is rich in voluptuous fancy, and augured well for the future fame of Mr. Tidmarsh, had he been spared: such, however, was not his destiny. As it is, he will probably pass, after a few years of friendly remembrance, into utter forgetfulness.

The kindred spirit that next faded from our view was ALEXANDER WILSON, author of Tinker's Gardens, and other humorous descriptive songs, which once were exceedingly popular in this district, though now seldom heard. One of those local emanations of the comic muse, albeit often printed, will bear reproducing here.

\* James Russell Lowell.

JOHNNY GREEN'S DESCRIPTION OF TINKER'S  
GARDENS.

Heigh! Hall o' Nabs, an' Sam an' Sue,  
 Why Jonathan, art tew theer too?  
 We're aw aloike, there's nowt to do,  
 So bring us a quart before us.  
 Aw'r at Tinker's gardens yusternoon,  
 An' what aw seed aw'll tell yo soon,  
 In a bran new sung, boh its to th' owd tune,  
 Yo'st ha't if yo'll join meh chorus.

Aw geet some brass fro' uncle Nat,  
 Eawr David lant me his best hat,  
 Then off for th' teawn aw seet full swat,  
 Mich faster nor Pickfort's waggins;  
 Aw paid meh brass, an' in aw goes,  
 An' eh! what shady bewers i' rows,  
 Wheer lots o' ladies an' their beaux  
 Wurn set to get their baggins.

Theer's bonfeairs fix'd o' th' top o' pows,  
 To leet yor poipes an' warm yor nose;  
 Then a thing to tell which way th' wind blows,  
 An' th' fish pond too did pleas meh:  
 Boh th' reawnd-heawse is the rummest shop,  
 Its fix'd on here an' theer a prop,  
 Just loike a great umbrella top,  
 If its not, Jimmy Johnson squeeze meh.

Aw seed a cage as big, aw'll swear,  
 As a wild beast show i' Salford fair,  
 Theer's rappits, brida, an' some things theer  
 Aw could no' gawm by th' mass, mon;  
 Aw thowt o' pullin' one chap's wigs,  
 For tellin' me they'r guinea-pigs,  
 Says aw, meh lad, aw'm up to your rigs,  
 They'r noane worth hawve o'th brass, mon.

Aw met wi' a wench aw'd often seen,  
 When aw wi' meh wark to th' teawn had bin,  
 Hoo'r dress'd as foine as ony queen,  
 So aw just stept up behind hur ;  
 Says aw, yung miss, dun yo wark for Kay's ?  
 Aw wove their crankys scores o' days ;  
 Hoo would no' speak, boh walk'd hur ways,  
 An' hoo'r nowt boh a bobbin woinder.

Boh th' band o' music caps owd Nick,  
 Aw ne'er seed th' loike sin' aw wur wick,  
 Ther'n dress'd loike sogers, thrung an' thick,  
 As merry as hey makers :  
 Up in a tree, foive yard fro' th' greawnd,  
 On a great big table, rail'd aw reawnd,  
 Whoile lads an' wenches jigg'd to th' seawnd  
 O' 'Merrily danc'd the Quakers.'

Then next aw seed a swing, by gad !  
 Wheer th' ladies flock'd loike hey-go-mad,  
 They wanted a roide far wor than th' lads,  
 They really did, for sure :  
 Ther'n one wur dress'd so noice i' blue,  
 An' loike an angel up hoo flew,  
 Hoo'd noice red cheeks, an' garters too,  
 So aw thowt aw'd buck up to hur.

Aw made hur link wi' mich ado,  
 An' mounted up a great heigh brow,  
 Wheer folk run up, an' deawn it too,  
 Just loike March hares, for sure :  
 So when eawr kale coom we begun,  
 An' stearted off, 'twur glorious fun !  
 Mich faster than Cock Robin run,  
 When he won at Karsey Moor.

What wark weh made aw'm shawm'd to tell,  
 We tried, boh could no' stop eawrsel,  
 Till into a bewer yed first we fell,  
 Wheer aw th' foine folk wur set, mon :

Some porter run aw deawn my shirt,  
 A biscuit stuck to th' lady's skirt,  
 An' whot wi' th' hurt, an' grease, an' dirt,  
 By gum aw feel it yet, mon.

Of aw the things that pleast us, John,  
 Wur Tinker's heawse wi' pot dolls on ;  
 Theer's Blucher, an' Lord Wellington,  
 An' Blue Beard look'd so glum, sirs :  
 Theer's Cupids under trees an' shrubs,  
 An' men wi' harps, an' some wi' clubs,  
 An' naked childer up o' tubs,  
 Don'd eawt wi' lots o' plums, sirs.

Reet hungry, aw seet meh deawn at last,  
 An' swallow'd ale an' cakes so fast,  
 Aw wonder meh waistcoat did no' brast,  
 Aw'r full as meh hide could crom, sirs :  
 When aw wur seen ot could be seen,  
 They play'd God save eawr noble queen,  
 Aw strid to th' tune reawnd th' bowlin' green,  
 An' away aw coom streight whom, sirs.

It bangs both play-heawse, fair, an' wakes,  
 For gam o' aw maks, ale, an' cakes,  
 Aw'll bet a quart, an' theaw'st howd th' stakes,  
 It bangs the king's creawnation :  
 Aw'd ha' yo to goo next Monday noon,  
 For if it rains poikels, late or soon,  
 Aw'll goo again if aw go beawt shoon,  
 For its th' grandest place i'th nation.

#### TINKER'S GARDENS AND THEIR MINSTREL.

Of Tinker's Gardens and their Minstrel many a pleasurable recollection may be called forth, and a few facts be worthily collated. Mr. Robert Tinker, the original promoter, and during nearly fifty years proprietor of these gardens, was born in the middle of the last century. Of his 'opening day' as

caterer for the amusement of the public there appears to be no printed record; but in 1797 he was in business here as conductor of the 'Grape and Compass Coffee House and Tea Gardens.' A few years later he figured on the same spot as licensed victualler. His trees having increased in size, his flowers in number, his bowling-green in velvet smoothness, he became enamoured of his possessions, and re-christened them the 'Elysian Gardens.' When this flight of fancy seized him he was doubtless seated in one of his leafy arbours, overlooking the then pleasant valley of the Irk. To a gentleman of Mr. Tinker's poetical temperament the dancing figures on his own undulating lawns would typify the rosy Hours in the Vale of Tempé; the shepherd's reed being denoted by the distant strains of the quadrille band. In 1814 the name of the gardens was again changed: they now became the 'Vauxhall,' like their great metropolitan contemporary. This name they retained until the demise of their owner in the Spring of 1836, at the allotted age of three score years and ten.

When balloon ascents were new and exciting objects Mr. Green, the æronaut, took several skyward trips from these pleasure grounds. On one occasion the removal of a balloon, after inflation, from the adjacent gas-yard, was announced to take place at six o'clock in the morning. A small party that had assembled at our shop stayed up all night to ensure a good view. Brown beer (which was their darling), tobacco, and conversation wiled away the hours cheerily enough until four or five o'clock, when one by one we dropped asleep at our post, as my Lord Tom Noddy and his fast companions have since done in the veritable Ingoldsby Legend. When

our watchers awoke to consciousness the sight had been seen,—the balloon had been removed to its destination. At that period Tinker's gardens, having passed their zenith, were not so fascinating to the multitude as they were when Alexander Wilson recorded their glories in his favourite ballad. Gala-days frequently brought forth a band of musicians, aided by a crowd of supernumeraries carrying banners and boards of notification; they thus paraded the town in military fashion, beating up for visitors. Nevertheless, the name of the gardens was still a household word in Manchester and its vicinity.

Natural as it is for the declining fortunes of institutions and of men to be deserted, it is no marvel that during several years I saw nothing of Tinker's gardens, although living in their neighbourhood. Rumour had told me, in her fitful manner, of various changes thereabouts: of fields disappearing, of brows being levelled, of new streets displacing the old lanes. One night, after closing my shop, I went to test the truthfulness of those rumours, and found the scene entirely metamorphosed. There is no metamorphoser equal to Time. Ovid sinks into insignificance beside him. Delves of sand and mixers of clay had laid all in waste, scarcely a trace remaining whereby to recognise the features of my early acquaintance. Within the gardens, houses had been built. Bits of hedgerow and patches of verdure surrounded the dwellings; while one solitary tree survived its companions. There was just enough of the dead Past to wear the appearance of a ghost haunting the living Present. I was disposed to muse—a minor Marius at a minor Carthage,—among those ruins; the more so, as the harvest moon and her constant



and respectful attendant, the evening star, were infusing the spirit of poetry into all the prosaic ramifications of our city. But the music of young voices dispersed my moralising ideas. On the highway beneath me a troop of girls were swinging in a merry round, and chorussing a succession of undying nursery rhymes, which seemed to harmonise with the old associations, even while chasing them away.

Alexander Wilson, the rhyming chronicler of Tinker's Gardens, that vanished resort of a fast disappearing generation, was essentially a Millgateer—one of the original Forty. His father, in the fourth year of the present century, kept a broker's shop in Red Bank, whence he removed previous to 1813 to Long Millgate. 'Oud Moike Wilson's goods'-shop theer' became noted, orally and in song. The old man died in 1840; and his son continued the concern in the same place until a new line of road diverted the traffic. Alexander did not fancy being left like Sir John Moore, alone with his glory; but being, on the contrary, a shrewd person of business habits, when customers ceased to come to him he wisely went to them, by removing himself and his goods to more fashionable premises, in Strangeways. His attention to trade was always pleasantly diversified by the composition of songs and pictures, he being a clever artist as well as a humourous lyricist. He excelled also as a singer of his own ballads, an accomplishment that gave additional interest to his society at the Sun Inn. These lyrics he allowed to float about in a fugitive manner until 1842, when he collected them—together with others of a similar character written by his father and brothers—under the general title of Songs of the Wilsons, and presented the tiny volume to the

Anti-Corn-Law Bazaar. Of his paintings, several were portraits of horses and dogs, embracing private favourites and public winners. The most ambitious production of his pencil was a grotesque rendering of Cheetham Hill Wakes. It represented an actual scene at his own door in Long Millgate. The rushcart, with a couple of rustics astride, was richly decorated with plate and flowers, while a plentiful supply of morris-dancers were heartily engaged in their merry vocation. The canvass was crowded with figures, many of which were likenesses. I saw this picture about twenty years ago, in the possession of the late Mr. Henry Glover, a worthy and intelligent hairdresser, who at that period kept a barber's shop—one of the right stamp—in Todd Street. Afterwards the painting ornamented the bar parlour of Richard Davies, our local hero of the prize ring.

Mr. Wilson died of decline. Months prior to his death he pursued his way with a slackening pace, his shadow daily lessening, until it altogether vanished. His remains lie in the cemetery at Cheetham Hill, beneath a flat stone, bearing the following inscription from the pen of Elijah Ridings, the well-known poetical bellman and bookseller:—

‘Sacred to the memory of Alexander Wilson, who departed this life January 6, 1846, aged 43 years.

Thy strains have charm'd the evening hours  
 With inoffensive glee,  
 And they who knew thy varied powers  
 May well remember thee.  
 While wit and humour are admired,  
 Thy quaint and cheerful rhymes,  
 By truest genius inspired,  
 Will brighten future times.’

During my visit to Cheetham Hill cemetery I was startled by the number of familiar names that confronted me on every side, and by the forgotten forms and faces suddenly brought to my recollection, as I had known them in life. 'The Hall of Memory was hung with their living portraits and funeral palls.' It is sufficiently saddening to feel oneself alone among living crowds, but to be the one breathing substance in a multitude of shadows,—of acquaintances resuscitated with all their peculiarities, is a position more strange and not less disagreeable.

ROBERT ROSE, although a native of Western India, was long resident in Manchester, and became one of our literary circle. While yet a child he took his final leave of the groves of palm, the mighty cataracts, the mystical streams peculiar to his birthplace, and to which he makes tender allusion in more than one of his poems. His metrical effusions, scattered through various newspapers and magazines, he never collected into a volume; though he issued in pamphlet form several pieces written for charitable purposes. His principal poem, entitled the Ocean Mystery, he did not live to finish: it remains a fragment. Mr. Rose was partial, it appears, to the sonnet, for he often gave utterance to his thoughts or vent to his feelings in that contracted measure. One of those brief compositions—sombre and almost prophetic—may be transcribed. It is addressed

## TO A STAR.

To thee, thou splendour of night's ebon scene,  
Deep, silent orisons are swiftly pour'd  
From pious hearts, all lonely and serene,  
As incense pure, ascending to their Lord.  
At this dread hour, immers'd in reverie deep,

Holding still converse with thy ray afar,  
 A wilderness of thoughts which banish sleep,  
 Distracts the mind, and wings it, glorious star!  
 Up to the centre of the universe,  
 To wander there, in space of spheres sublime;  
 But still think calmly on the quiet hearse,  
 What hour it slowly moves to church-bell's chime:  
 Though earth it bears to earth, yet, like thy light,  
 The soul shall rise resplendent o'er its night.

With a competency secured to him, Mr. Rose was enabled to indulge the promptings of his nature, which was extremely generous, especially towards those who, like himself, courted the sweet favours of the Muse. His cordial disposition, however, led him into boon companionship, and this, carried to excess, ultimately affected his brain and shortened his days.\* Upon the conduct and death of the bard of colour unfeeling comments have occasionally been made; but they who thus commented might well have spoken with kindness,

\* A Bard's Epitaph, written by Burns, applies with peculiar force to the grave of Robert Rose:—

Is there a whim-inspired fool,  
 Owre fast for thought, owre hot for rule,  
 Owre blate to seek, owre proud to snool?  
     Let him draw near,  
 And owre this grassy heap sing dool,  
     And drap a tear.

Is there a Bard of rustic song,  
 Who, noteless, steals the crowds among,  
 That weekly this area throng?  
     O pass not by!  
 But, with a frater-feeling strong,  
     Here heave a sigh.

since we all live in glass houses, more or less liable to fracture from the force of evil words.

As an author, Mr. Rose may be classed with the many whose intellectual powers cannot be fairly estimated by their published works. Though ardently yearning for distinction, he could not endure the task-work and self-denial necessary to its attainment; his sanguine temperament was ill-fitted to 'scorn delights,' and his fiery imagination would not brook 'laborious days.' The difference between steady application and the indulgence of fitful humours in composition is plainly revealed when authors pass from amongst us—when personal influence is removed—and minds are rigidly measured by their productions. Although this foolish longing to reap the harvest without the preparatory patient sowing of the seed has been

Is there a man, whose judgment clear  
 Can others teach the course to steer,  
 Yet runs, himself, life's mad career,  
     Wild as the wave?  
 Here pause—and thro' the starting tear,  
     Survey this grave.

The poor inhabitant below  
 Was quick to learn, and wise to know,  
 And keenly felt the friendly glow,  
     And softer flame;  
 But thoughtless follies laid him low,  
     And stain'd his name!

Reader, attend—whether thy soul  
 Soars fancy's flights beyond the pole,  
 Or darkling grubs this earthly hole  
     In low pursuit,  
 Know, prudent, cautious, *self-control*,  
     Is wisdom's root.

detrimental to Mr. Rose's fame, yet, as the first of India's sons to cultivate the graces of poetry in this country, he is deserving, at the least, of a friendly record and a brief remembrance.

Robert Rose died suddenly, under the influence of a fit of delirium tremens, on Tuesday, the nineteenth of June, 1849, at the same early age as Alexander Wilson, namely, forty-three years. He was interred at the Manchester general cemetery, Harpurhey; a place of sepulture that is becoming remarkable, like the sea, for its amount of buried treasure. A number of literary friends followed his remains to the grave, Mr. Rogerson officiating as registrar. A verse selected from one of Mr. Rose's poems, entitled Fame, Freedom, and Friendship (a glorious triad, ever dear to the poet,) constitutes his epitaph:—

I'd rather have my tomb bedew'd at eve  
 With the lone orphan's or the good man's tear,  
 Who softly stole at twilight here to grieve,  
 And sobb'd aloud—*the friend of man rests here!*  
 I'd rather have this quiet, humble fame,  
 Than hollow echo of an empty name.

BENJAMIN STOTT, and his place of rest, have the next claim to our attention. As that place of rest is situated on the border of agricultural Cheshire, we shall have the advantage of a country stroll, with a clear sky overhead; with numerous bands of potato-diggers peopling the fields; with brown laughing children intersecting the bye-ways; and with divers other bits of rustic life and rural scenery, which will foster the natural dislike we have long borne towards all manufacturing towns.



NORTHENDEN CHURCH AND FERRY.

'Of those that sleep in earth so cold,  
 No more the cheerful day to view,  
 Should many a tender tale be told,  
 For many a tender thought is due.'

*Langhorne.*

Although it may be perfectly true that comfort to the living is worth ten times the amount of compliment to the dead, still there is a debt of gratitude and respect owing to the departed, which the feeling heart will always take pride and consolation in discharging. This is merely natural, with a particle perhaps of selfishness blended; for it is a startling truth—a truth that sways the actions of thoughtful men with an incalculable influence—that all must die; requiring at the hands of others the same kind offices, in their turn, which they pay to those gone before them. And while there is

implanted in the breast a dread of perishing like the wandering Arab in the desert; of being committed to the monsters of the deep; or, escaping these, of being wrapped in a seaweed shroud and left to blanch in some wild recess; there will always be a certain amount of soothing though melancholy pleasure in the contemplation of a sweet sleep in the quiet, pastoral church-yard.

There is a truthful adage which says, 'It matters little to the dead where or how they are buried.' But who shall be bold enough to contend that it matters little to the dying? Of course none can know how much humanity lives, hopes, and suffers, in its last lucid hour, except those who have passed through the ordeal, and whose lips can never reveal the mystery; but we are convinced the mind, at this crisis, is endowed with more than human perception; that while it vividly reviews the past, and dwells upon the present, it sweeps far into the immensity of the future. The tears that will fall for its loss are noted, and bring solace; the traits of affection and duty that will be shown to its memory are marked and appreciated; the flowers that will spring upon one particular mound are seen and bring odour to the fading sense. Finally, these mingle with the whispered prayer and the deep response,—with drooping trees, and singing birds, and children at play with tombs.

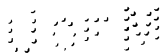
It is consoling to the invalid to find that delicate health, under some circumstances, is a positive advantage; that as the body suffers in its strength, the mind becomes sensitive and refined. Without question, a robust and hardy constitution gives zest to the pleasures of a fair, a wake, or other festival; but it acts as a barrier to much mental enjoyment,



and more especially unfits its possessor for the full appreciation of the solemn beauties of a country church-yard. The lightest step, the gentlest tone, are required to hold converse with the dead in their hallowed resting-place. Still the visitor should not enter here with confirmed disease for a companion; the certainty of an early fate would jaundice his vision. Too near a view destroys the effect of death's sublime scenery. But let him occasionally, when in the pursuit of pleasure or business,—when filled with anticipations of joy or of gain, feel some sudden pang or gloomy presentiment; or stand upon the verge of a newly-made grave, and listen to the mould as it rattles on his own name and kindred. *Then* may he pace the sanctuary in a subdued and proper spirit, and the epitaphs shall not seem as meaningless as if written on milestones, but each slumbering inmate shall read to him its own record, voicelessly, it is true, but with an impressive silence 'more eloquent than words.'

In the repositories of the dead I have long been an occasional observer; and, circumstances permitting, would willingly follow the romantic example of Old Mortality, until I had visited every interesting nook and corner of the land.

Of Old Mortality I have sometimes curiously thought that, were I called to enumerate my favourite poets, his name should be placed in the foremost rank. And why not? If ever there existed a 'mute, inglorious Milton,' it was certainly he. His life was a lengthened dream—his death a romance; while his memory is associated with all that is pure and devoted in human nature. Dear wandering minstrel! there was poetry in every stroke of his hammer and chisel,—



music in every sound emitted from his lyre—the martyr's stone!

Some touching proofs of attachment to the departed have come under my notice in the course of these church-yard musings; but I have hesitated to introduce them here, because fiction has so long held the vantage ground in anecdotes of this description that truth appears, in comparison, but second-hand and threadbare.

Feeling desirous, not very long ago, of a few hours relaxation in the country, I went with a friend to Northenden. As we passed through Rusholme and Greenheys the wind was fresh though genial, and the sun dispersing the autumnal mist, made the day warm and exhilarating. A guard of honour, consisting of a bevy of dead leaves, rustled before us, bringing to mind the miniature waves that ripple before the chariot of Neptune. My friend being an artist, and full of the treasures of our recent Exhibition at Old Trafford, enhanced our enjoyment by dividing the scenery into sections,—framing the extended landscape into countless cabinet views. In this expeditious and economical manner he formed a perfect gallery of pictures—all genuine—by the greatest Living Artist. The moving panorama was six miles and a half in length, terminating with the church, mill, and ferry of Northenden. One scene struck me as being especially fine; it must, I think, have been Nature's masterpiece in this district, for in its graceful branching and beautiful trellis-work of leaves it might have suggested a lesson even unto Creswick or Linnell. A still sweeter picture lay within the foliage, revealing itself in glimpses of a quiet lake and floating swans.



We entered Northenden in the middle of the afternoon, when the villagers were away, engaged in their agricultural pursuits; and the consequent air of seclusion was an added charm. We saw few besides here and there a cluster of merry children in picturesque hats, or with uncovered curls still more picturesque. These were variously engaged. Some were grouping in the sunlight at the door of a thatched cottage, blowing bubbles, or listlessly watching them ascend; others were romping within the shadow of the church, or the vicarage gable; all were unconsciously tempting the artist's pencil to transfer them to his sketch-book. On arriving at the stile-like entrance to the burial ground, we found the steps occupied by a boy of four or five summers, wearied with chasing butterflies, and gave him a copper as an inducement for him to quit his position. He proved to be a sensitive subject. The instant effect of the coin was to fill the indolent child with excitement. Gazing wistfully at his present, he strutted down the rustic lane to his mother, showing all the comical airs and joyous abandon of intoxication.

Northenden church-yard had many attractions for us. Although a footpath ran through it, the place was retired, and we could meditate our fill without being subjected to the incessant gaze which is found so annoying at many cemeteries. Our attention was given chiefly to one particular grave, although there were other objects of greater pretensions,—including the tomb of the Worthingtons of Sharston, and the chaste monument erected over the remains of the minister's lady. As we read the epitaph of our buried associate it was natural for us to feel how soon a mighty barrier had been

raised between us, and how soon, again, the barrier would be removed. The lines ran thus:—

Here resteth the body of BENJAMIN STOTT, of Manchester, who died July 28th, 1850, aged thirty-six years. He was an influential member of the National Independent Order of Odd Fellows, and by them much esteemed.

Pause, gentle stranger, for a man lies here  
Whose hand was open, and whose heart sincere  
To truth and kindness rendered homage due;  
His friends were many, and his foes were few.  
Errors he had, but they were such as be  
In the frail nature of humanity;  
Virtues he had, but they were such as claim  
No noisy greeting from the voice of fame:  
His virtues we remember, but the rest  
We leave to Him whose mercy doeth best.

While I was engaged in copying the above inscription, my companion retired to observe. When I rejoined him he was seated on the low boundary wall, sketching the sun-dial and an old yew that stood in the vicinity. The knotted trunk and a few fantastic branches were all that remained of the once huge tree. Coated with ivy, and otherwise visibly impressed with the flight of ages, it seemed as if a ray of moonlight and the wand of superstition would have given motion to those skeleton arms. I was not surprised to learn that this was once a trysting tree, for love and death have ever been close companions;—ever (as Tennyson beautifully affirms) since the mighty moon gathered light above the thymy plots of Paradise. It is also a legendary tree, and the legend respecting it was preserved by one Maister Lovelle, and imprinted in the pages of the Phoenix, a Manchester Literary Journal for the year 1828. This Maister Lovelle

was in reality William Rowlinson, a young local poet who was partial to many aliases, and who, in his fondness for quaint devices and old-time imitations, resembled his brother in poetry and misfortune, Thomas Chatterton. Rowlinson was drowned in the river Thames, whilst bathing, on Monday, the twenty-second of June, 1829, and was buried in Bisham Church-yard, Berkshire.

SIR GUALTER.

A Tradition of Northen Boat-House.

‘Nowe ferrie me o’er, thou goode boatman!  
I prithee ferrie me o’er!  
That I may see my ladye to-nighte,  
Or I never may see her more.’

‘The winds blowe high, and the streame runs strong,  
And I dare not ferrie thee o’er;  
Thou can’st not see thy ladye to-nighte,  
If thou never dost see her more.’

‘I will see her to-nighte if my life be spared,  
For I’ve heard the death-owl’s screame;  
Who has heard it once may not hear it twice,  
She must hear my awful dreame.’

‘My boat is moor’d, and I will not crosse;  
Sir Knight, thou may’st away,  
Or rest thee to-nighte till the morning’s lighte;  
We will o’er at break of day.’

‘Here’s gold in store, and thou shalt have more,  
To venture acrossse with me;  
If we die ere we reach the other bank  
A masse shall be sung for thee.’

The boat is unmoor’d, and they both leape in,  
And steere for the other side;  
Nowe swim thou swiftly, thou fearless boat,  
Against the rushing tide.

Nowe, nowe, for thy life thou boatman push,  
 For the streame runs swifter on ;  
 Another boat's length, with all thy strength,  
 And the bank ye have safely won.

'Tis past! 'tis past! they have reach'd the side,  
 And they both leape on the bank :  
 'Tis well! 'tis well! with an eddying whirle  
 That boat hath swiftly sank.

Sir Gaulter hath given the boatman gold,  
 Thence hastes to the trysting tree ;  
 What a rueful sighte, for a gallant knighte,  
 Was there for him to see.

The Ladye Isabelle blacken'd and scorch'd  
 By the lightning blaste of heaven ;  
 And that stately tree, where they oft had met,  
 Was leafless and blasted and riven !

He kneel'd him down o'er that lifeless forme,  
 And the death-owl o'er him flew ;  
 And it scream'd as it pass'd, on the rushing blaste,  
 Then his fate Sir Gaulter knew.

Then he gather'd that forme within his arms  
 And rush'd to the river's side ;  
 Then plunged from the bank, and both of them sank  
 In the darkly-rolling tide.

The neighbouring rustics tell—or told—how a mailed knight and his lady fair alternately glide in spirit beneath the ancient yew, vainly endeavouring to keep the appointed tryst which death so ruthlessly prevented. As our visit occurred in the day-time, we could not expect to see the mystic shadows that flit only in the glimpses of the moon ; but the tree, the boat-house, and the river were palpable enough, and these, according to all the laws of ghost-land, sufficiently bore witness to the truthfulness of the legendary ballad.

As my friend pursued his sketching, I took my turn at observation. Lingered with the sun-dial, I watched the play of the slanting shadows—the light artillery of Time—upon the figured plate. It was difficult to conceive that that sturdy yew,—together with the inmates of those grassy mounds and lettered graves and sculptured tombs, had all fallen in the noiseless yet ceaseless warfare, beneath these gentlest of gentle strokes. We were agreeably interrupted in our reflections by the sudden presence of a rosy buxom girl, who had leaped over the wall with a basket of newly-gathered flowers. She stepped so lightly over the heavy sleepers, and her ‘things of beauty’ were so sweet and glowing among the emblems of decay, that the force of contrast was almost magical. In her progress she dropped a dahlia from her store; this we shortly afterwards lifted from the gravestone where it had fallen, and brought away as a fleeting remembrancer.



NORTHENDEN SUN-DIAL.

To the eye accustomed to dwell on cathedrals and priory

ruins, the church of Northenden presents but few attractions in an architectural point of view, being small, simple, and appropriate. Yet if drawn from the opposite bank, so as to include the grassy undulating knoll; the river, dotted with pleasure boats, and crossed by the ferry; the ferry house, and the mill weir; a pleasing picture might be formed. Had I been a patron of art, anxious to enrich my gallery, a commission would have been given on the spot to some rising artist.

We could not do less than take a glass of refreshment at the ferry house, previous to re-crossing the stream. We chose brown stout, as forming a rather happy amalgamation with the white and weakly. Brown and stout! What more symbolical of the rude health and freedom, the romance in short, of gipsy life, apart from its thieving and treachery? The words were full of suggestiveness. As I looked at them, suspended within their ornamental frame over the mantel-piece of our hostess, it was easy to see fanciful groups of reapers and gleaners floating before them; and if I heard not vintage songs, and carols of harvest home, I must have been strangely mistaken. Possibly the illusion was heightened by wreathing smoke from the pipe of my friend, as it rose before my eyes in gentle whiffs, not fulsome clouds; ascending higher and higher, until it melted like the spirits of Prospero, into thin air.

On our return we traversed the banks of the Mersey, where so many Lancashire swimmers have sought acquaintance with the Cheshire waters; where, too, so many local heroes have entered the ring, and fought for love or for wagers. At Didsbury we mounted the omnibus for Manchester, reaching



our respective places of business in due time, and feeling the better for our brief excursion.

By dwelling on these personal and desultory matters I have indulged perhaps too far in a natural failing. However much we may wish to talk or write of others, we are apt to remember ourselves a little too frequently. But now I will return to my deceased friend, and shortly bid him good-bye.

Benjamin Stott was born at Manchester, on the twenty-fourth of November, 1813, being the youngest of thirteen children. His father, who was a hair dresser, subsequently became an auctioneer. His mother was a descendant of an ancient family, for centuries located in the Peak of Derbyshire. Deprived of both his parents when he was under six years of age, a maiden aunt ably supplied their place until he attained his ninth year. At this period Benjamin was admitted into Chetham's College. Previously, however, he had been taught to read and write at the National School. These acquirements were of great advantage to him in gaining admission into the College. During his stay at the last-named institution, from 1822 to 1827, he made little progress in learning; owing, as he alleged, to the education of the boys being neglected. It is to be hoped Mr. Stott's was an exceptional case. For myself, early associations have always prepossessed me in favour of good old Humphrey's foundation. In 1825, at the very time Stott was wearing his blue coat and cap, I became a candidate for admission, but failed to obtain my scholarship.

On leaving the College at the end of his term, Benjamin Stott was apprenticed to a bookbinder of literary taste and connections, and followed that business, as journeyman and

master, during the remainder of his short life. Thus was fostered in him an ardent love of poetry and poets, which had early evinced itself. In 1843 he published his only volume, *Songs for the Millions and other Poems*; which songs the millions were slow to appreciate, and quick to forget.

**CHARLES KENWORTHY.**—Only five weeks intervened between the death of Stott and that of Charles Kenworthy. Mr. Kenworthy did not die in the midst of his summer glory, as died most of his compeers, but passed slowly along his wintry way to the dark valley. He was born at the Red Lion Inn, Church Street, Manchester, September 12, 1773. The house was taken down a few years ago. After serving an apprenticeship to pattern designing, at Preston, he followed that business in several towns of the United Kingdom, up to an advanced age. He early indulged his poetical fancies in the pages of the *Manchester Gazette*, and became its most frequent contributor. Well do I remember those poems being among my first newspaper readings, and forming my first clippings for the scrap-book. To any person curious in matters of contrast it is worth while to turn over a file of the *Gazette*. During the stormy periods of the blanketeering expedition, and of the Peterloo movement, the placidity of Mr. Kenworthy's nature remained unruffled. His *Pastoral Hymns* appear side by side with the fiery denunciations of outraged and outrageous patriotism. He addresses the *Evening Star* and appeals to the *Waning Moon* as deliberately as if he had no immediate business upon earth. In 1808 Mr. Kenworthy issued a shilling pamphlet consisting of

mingled poetry and politics, entitled, *A Peep into the Temple*. This was followed at wide intervals by other small ventures; but it was not until he became an old man of seventy years and upwards that he collected and published his scattered verses. They form a portly volume, under the title of *Original Poems on Miscellaneous Subjects*. Mr. Kenworthy died here on the thirty-first of July, 1850, after an ailment of but a few days' duration.

I spent several hours one afternoon in exploring the cemetery at Rusholme Road. My chief object was to search for two special graves: one being that of my father, who died during my childhood; the other, that of Charles Kenworthy our veteran bard. The first could not be found; in the second case I was more successful. Mr. Kenworthy's remains lie between the tomb of the Reverend Dr. Jack and the grave of Mr. Archibald Prentice, the well-known journalist and historian of local politics. The poet's epitaph is very brief, and few more plaintive can be found upon record:—

Here slumbers Sorrow's Child.

Another silent witness to the hard conditions imposed by Fame upon all who wish to be remembered after death. The same gravestone contains the names of Mr. Kenworthy's mother-in-law, his youngest daughter, and his widow. There is also a tributary verse from his pen to the memory of the daughter, who died at the age of twenty-one:—

In life's bright morn she rose, beloved, esteem'd;  
 In her mild beauty, wit, sense, virtue beam'd;  
 Earth's bliss how brief! Hope's dream how soon destroy'd!  
 Ere noon, like Spring's fair flower, she droop'd and died:  
 O'er all that cheer'd and charm'd chill silence reigns;  
 Of all that breathed and bloom'd but dust remains.

In one of the latest and sweetest of his poems Mr. Kenworthy makes some interesting allusions to his early life and early love. The piece contains also prognostications of the author's decease, which were too soon verified, and furnishes the striking line which has been adopted as his epitaph.

THE CHILD OF SORROW.

When at my birth the midwife sung,  
 And gossips gaily smiled,  
 Dark Sorrow o'er my cradle hung,  
 And mark'd me as her child.

Too well through many a painful year,  
 Her fatal mark I've borne;  
 A father's fault oft' drew the tear,  
 In childhood's smiling morn.

The friends that bless'd my manhood's bloom,  
 Their loss I lived to tell;  
 And o'er loved Julia's early tomb  
 My tear-drops softly fell.

As the world open'd to my view  
 My fondest hopes were foil'd;  
 O'er faded joys I sighed, adieu,  
 And wept, as Sorrow's child.

To soothe the melancholy hour,  
 My lonely grief to quell,  
 I sought the Muse's magic bower,  
 And listen'd to her spell.

In pensive mood with her I stray'd,  
 (For Sorrow loves the Muse,)  
 I wooed her smile, nor did the maid  
 To me her smile refuse.

I sought to catch the living rays  
 Of Nature's hallowed fire,  
 That glance across the Poet's gaze,  
 And lighten o'er his lyre.

Swift o'er the chords, harsh, wild, and deep,  
 At first my hand I threw ;  
 Oft I essay'd, till, at each sweep,  
 The tones more mellow grew ;

Till, heard by village swains around,  
 The strains harmonious rose ;  
 They charm'd my griefs, while seem'd the sound  
 Responsive to my woes.

And still when sorrow makes me sigh,  
 I share the maiden's smiles,  
 She soothes me with her lullaby,  
 The lonely hour beguiles.

But pain and sorrow soon will cease,  
 The storm of life pass o'er,  
 And I shall sweetly sleep in peace,  
 To wake on happier shore :

While, o'er my grave, at closing day,  
 Where all is calm and mild,  
 Haply some tuneful bard may say,  
 ' Here slumbers Sorrow's Child.'

People who care nothing for biographical sketches unless they record the exploits of the great or the notorious, will scarcely be pleased with these notices of deceased authors, many of whom are already fading from memory. They will, on the contrary, be rather disposed to coincide with an old epigrammatical epitaph, containing just enough of malice to please the malicious, and just enough of truth to render its application justifiable :—

' Here lie your poets. Pray forgive  
 The works that fed their pride.  
 Long after death they hoped to live,  
 But long before it, died.'

Yet many will accept without apology the few passing words due to the members of our studious circle. What though some of our departed friends belonged to that numerous and unfortunate class of writers who reap little advantage from their productions while here, and for whom, in a literary sense, there is no hereafter? Most cities can point, with Manchester, to ambitious sons who have been thrown while wrestling with fortune, or who have fallen when climbing in pursuit of fame; and most men find cause for sympathising with the discomfited. 'As for me, who take my rank amongst the minnows, and not as a Triton either, I have a due fellow feeling for their humble emulation and tiny pride.' Many of our local authors have lacked, it seems, the charm that fascinates the public ear,—a charm inherited by talent, when found in conjunction with good fortune. That talent alone, without the concurring 'accidents of success,' is insufficient to win or retain general favour there are many examples to prove. One illustration, however, will be enough for my purpose. It is contained in the following passage, selected from a work by G. J. Holyoake, on the value of biography: 'The volumes of the Monthly Repository,' writes Mr. Holyoake, 'in which was originally published the Autobiography of Charles Reece Pemberton, or Pel Verjuice, as he quaintly designated himself, were library books of the Birmingham Mechanics' Institution, and I well remember the avidity with which they were sought after. He thought himself lucky who succeeded in getting them out. What Robinson Crusoe or Philip Quarll was to the juvenile wonder-seeker, the Autobiography of Pel Verjuice was to the healthier taste of the advanced student. Pel Verjuice was a fund of marvels.

His autobiography was a fresh revelation of human nature. Not only in adventure, but in philosophy—not only in what he saw or what he did, but in what he felt, did the reader become aware of the charm of individuality. By mere sympathy with such a writer a man becomes wiser,—for to feel as he felt is to be pure, simple, ardent, and independent.’ The extracts interspersed through the review proved that Pel Verjuice merited the warm eulogy of his reviewer,—that Pemberton was an uncommon man,—a man of pure heart and clear intellect, and so deeply imbued with the spirit of Freedom that the formalities of life were as fetters to him. In thought, fire, feeling, he was essentially a poet. Yet, has one individual in twenty heard of Pel Verjuice the Wanderer? I think not. The name was new to me, though all my life I have been a glutton at reading. This is only one out of a multitude of similar cases. So our rhyming friends may take consolation in their obscurity, when so many brave hearts and bright intellects are equally obscured. They may freely fill a bumper at the Waters of Oblivion, and pledge such worthy associates without writhing a muscle at the bitterness of the draught. ‘God deals with poets,’ remarks Jean Paul, in his subtle manner, ‘as men deal with nightingales, hanging a dark cloth round the cage until they sing the right tune.’ As the vast majority of versifiers fail in their efforts to sing the right tune, or, in other words, fail to wake the true chord in the human heart, the dark cloth never ceases to envelope them until displaced by a white one—the shroud. Granting our ephemerals were, and are, as nothing to the world, still they did the state some service even in their failures. At the least, they gave the advantage of contrast to their superiors,—to those who, in our provincial

dialect, had more weft in them. Thus, nothingness has its uses. In the unceasing battle of life, the famous gather their laurels over the mounds of the unknown. The knell of the fallen brings the pæon of the victor. So in peace, if the tens and hundreds did not receive blanks in the vast lottery, the units could never draw capital prizes. This subject wears another aspect, and may thus be humourously treated by persons who are pleasantly disposed. We are grieved of course, (they might say in their good-nature,) when so many ventures sink, knowing as we do the hopes and aspirations that sink with them. Yet when duly analysed, things seem just as they should be. How could they be better? We have a few victorious authors standing proudly aloft, like a group of statues, while all the rest become useful and necessary in forming, as it were, the pedestals and recumbent figures.

Before quitting Rusholme Road Cemetery, it is well to linger a few minutes beside a large and beautiful monument, placed near the entrance. It is raised in honour of a reverend gentleman who possessed many talents, literary and otherwise. He was one of those devoted students who follow the advice of the poet Alexander Pope, by drinking deeply and ardently of the Pierian spring. Studying early and late, he allowed himself no relaxation. Yet the end of all was, that in his fate he merely exemplified the old story that has been so often told of the vanity of human aspirations; for when his gifts and acquirements were fully matured,—when he was prepared to live with honour to himself and profit to his fellows—he died. On each of the four sides of the monument appears an inscription. These inscriptions are so full and explicit that they may be given without further commentary :



In this tomb lie the mortal remains of Robert Stephens Mc All, L.L.D., pastor, from January, 1827, till his death, of the Independent Church and congregation which met in Mosley-street chapel, Manchester. He was born at Plymouth, 4th August, 1792, and died at Swinton, 27th July, 1838.

Of commanding and attractive bodily presence; of manners combining rare dignity, grace, and gentleness; of mental powers, acute, brilliant, vigorous, and profound; enriched with large stores of various knowledge, and gifted with eloquence seldom surpassed, he devoted all with intense ardour to the service of Christ and His Church, until, in the prime of manhood, he was found by the Great Master to be meeter for the heavenly crown than for the earthly conflict, and called to his everlasting rest.

Underneath is the resting place also of Eliza Jane, his only daughter, who was born June 22nd, 1819, and preceding her heart-stricken father only by a few days, fell asleep in Jesus, July 6th, 1838.

Erected A.D., 1854, by many who loved and honoured him, and in whose souls Time has but deepened the sense of irreparable loss with which they saw him taken from them, and made his memory more fragrant and more precious.

During the five or six years following the demise of Charles Kenworthy we were exempt from bereavement. The Way Home was untrodden by any local bard. At length the pleasant truce was broken by the death of Mr. William Earnshaw, the frank and genial host of the Poets' Corner, at the period of our festive gatherings. Leaving Mr. Earnshaw to his rest with the kindly remembrance he so well deserved, I may revert to his literary meetings, to which we were thus nobly welcomed in song by one of our ablest singers:—

#### THE POETS' WELCOME.

BY J. C. PRINCE.

Welcome! ye worshippers of that sweet power,  
The sweet mysterious power of Poesy,

That echo of the beautiful in shape,  
 Sound, hue, and fragrance ; that calm voice  
 Of man's affections, aspirations, dreams ;  
 That strange, impalpable, and blessed thing  
 Whose home is narrow as the human heart,  
 And wide as is the universe ; that shade  
 Of God which passes through the mind of man,  
 And wakes within him thoughts which, wed to words,  
 Become the thoughts of millions ; that pure ray  
 Sent down from the eternal fount of glory,  
 A sign and earnest of immortal life  
 Beyond the dim, dread barriers of Death !

Welcome ! ye lovers of that spellful art  
 Which few possess, yet thousands can enjoy ;  
 Welcome to this our festival of soul  
 And heart, where we may interchange the things  
 Which lie enshrined within us,—mental flowers  
 Which soon might languish, perish, pass away  
 Unnoticed of the world, did we not seek  
 To bring them from their solitudes, and throw  
 The light of friendship round them, in the hope  
 That Fame will stoop to gather them ere long,  
 And weave them into wreaths for her eternal shrines.

The poet's soul, bless Heaven, is rife with means  
 To multiply the pleasures of his race :  
 His warm heart thrills in sympathy with all  
 The suffering of the earth. The great and good  
 To him are ever glorious, and he yearns  
 'To throw those feelings out which bear him up'  
 Against the storms and sorrows of the world !  
 The scatter'd sons of humanizing song,  
 Like twilight stars ought not to reign apart,  
 As jealous of each other's light ; but come  
 Clustering in one most glorious galaxy  
 Of mental splendour, as I see ye now !

Welcome again to this our old retreat,  
 This corner of antiquity ! This group

Of wilding flowers which open to the night,  
Breathing the holy incense of high thought,  
May one day send its odours through the world.

It was in the pages of our local magazines and newspapers that the poetry of Mr. PRINCE first attracted my attention. Like a fanciful masquer, it came often disguised ; yet was it always agreeable. Britannicus carried me far, in fancy, with his songs descriptive of a wanderer's life ; Harold Hastings roused me with noble thoughts and vigorous language ; Walter Wellbrook charmed with mellow notes and rustic images. When these were all traced to one source, and blended in a volume, I received from the perusal of Mr. Prince's poems a fulness of satisfaction that few others afforded me—a mental feast as it were, whilst the majority of versifiers yielded only a snack, leaving my appetite still craving and ungratified. Holding these favourable sentiments, I embodied them in metre, and addressed to Mr. Prince a sonnet, although on the whole disliking the restriction of fourteen lines. Fancy in fetters is not to my taste. Adopted mainly for its brevity, the sonnet appears formal, often spiritless ; and though there are some specimens of exquisite beauty, the same ideas would, I think, be better expressed in another measure, leaving to the poet more freedom. This opinion, however, is merely volunteered by the way, and with all due deference to Petrarch and Bowles, of sonnetting memories. Mr. Prince returned the compliment in a similarly brief epistle ; and forthwith was commenced a series of friendly communications, in prose and in rhyme, of which the annexed badinage is a free-and-easy sample. It will be gathered from the context that a tiff—a transient pet, a lovers' quarrel—had sprung up between the

ladies of Mount Helicon and myself; that I had transferred my affections to a more substantial object; and had become as firmly resolved as was Don Fabricio, to write no more works of genius in verse.

## A FAMILIAR EPISTLE.

Dear Bard, I entreat your attention and time,  
 While I wrap my stray thoughts in the mantle of rhyme.  
 You accuse me, though gently, of slight and neglect  
 To the Muses, who claim our unceasing respect :  
 You hint that such scorn on myself will recoil,  
 That those pure ones no longer will solace my toil,  
 But rather divest my fond harp of its string,  
 When vainly I mount my Pegasus to sing.  
 If confession be good, the impeachment I own,  
 But am still at a loss in which way to atone ;  
 Although I shall love them till life hath an end,  
 I cannot consistently promise to mend ;  
 For since I last wrote you, though freedom be fair,  
 A life-lasting chain I've consented to wear ;  
 My wooings Platonic henceforth I'll resign,  
 And yield up to one what I erst gave to Nine ;  
 For when a man's wed he must hie to the shades,  
 Nor sport in the sunshine with pretty coy maids.  
 But still if a man, in a wife good and pure,  
 To himself the best treasures of earth can secure,  
 Need he sigh for the Muse, with chameleon's fare—  
 A banquet of smiles, and vain hopes, and thin air ?  
 Yet think not, dear Prince, I presume to disdain  
 The charmers who've cheer'd me thro' pleasure, thro' pain :  
 When cold and ungrateful the heart in my breast,  
 When it scorns to acknowledge where once it was blest,  
 May the pale hand of death on its vitals be laid,  
 And Sylvan repose in obscurity's shade.  
 Though stern scenes of truth, and new cares as they rise,  
 May chain me to earth when I'd soar to the skies ;  
 Though interest and trade may successfully claim

The time and the talent I late gave to fame ;  
Yet a few passing hours will I frequently steal,  
To pen for the world what the world bids me feel ;  
And these, if the Muse prove propitious and free,  
Shall ever be given to her and to thee.

In the winter of 1840-1, was paid my first friendly visit to Mr. Prince, at Hyde. The 'Bard of Hyde,' as Mr. Prince was styled, was then a factory operative, wearing the Cheadle Swinger usually worn by his class in country towns and villages. At that early time, and in that substantial garment, there was about the poet an air of sturdiness, of homely comfort, which shortly afterwards disappeared when broadcloth came to supplant velveteen. I found him engaged in the pleasant task of revising his manuscript for the press, being on the eve of publishing his maiden volume, *Hours with the Muses*. Scarcely better known than his visitor, he was little expecting the immediate triumph which awaited him. No book of poems has been welcomed in this district with so hearty a greeting, or has run through so many editions. A few months sufficed to make his name a familiar sound in our ears. Local editor and metropolitan reviewer emulated each other in making his merits known, and in repeating the romantic story of his life. This unusual amount of success was fairly due to Mr. Prince, for not one of all the children of song who have emanated from our county has a better claim to the title of poet, in the true sense of that often misapplied word. So melodious and high-toned are his productions that some persons, having read them admiringly, and having in consequence sought acquaintance with the author, have murmured that he failed to realize his own ideal; that the eloquence which flowed so freely from his pen was almost

a stranger to his tongue; that the wisdom and goodness which ran through his poems like 'silver streams' were sometimes alien to his actions. Alas! they thought of the flower and its Maker, rather than of the earth and her produce. They remembered not the ancient parables of the flesh and the spirit—of the light and the lantern. 'The mind,' says the sightless artist of Florence, 'sees only the beautiful.' He might have added, further, that in the mental region the beautiful is also pure, never sinful and syren-like—fascinating, to lead us astray. The unfortunate distinction existing between the Real and the Ideal, especially in poetical natures, has called forth, ere now, emblems sufficient to gratify the shade of ancient Quarles; yet there are few more fitting for the purpose than the mountain stream. Purely and impulsively gushing from its source, to gather many a stain as it flows, even while reflecting all glorious things that appear on its margin, does it not aptly typify the poet, in his career through the temptation and selfishness, the ceremonial and pretension, of the world?

Mr. Prince's mind and pen have been reasonably prolific. *Hours with the Muses* was followed, in 1847, by *Dreams and Realities*, a volume of mingled verse and prose; in 1850, by the *Poetic Rosary*, in which, also, prose narratives were incorporated with the poems; and in 1856, by his latest volume, *Autumn Leaves*. Besides producing these original books, Mr. Prince edited the *Shepherds' Magazine* from its commencement in 1845, to the close of the year 1851. Although his later works are worthy of his genius, and have been duly approved by the press and the public, yet his earliest volume remains his best. *Hours with the Muses*,

like the Festus of Philip Bailey, the Mind of Charles Swain, and many other firstlings that might be cited, is the mainstay of a reputation.



*J. C. Prince*

WILLIAM HARPER, the most recent loss our diminished circle has sustained, was the son of William and Frances Harper, of this city. He died, as appears by the inscription on his gravestone, on the twenty-fifth of January, 1857, aged fifty-one years. Of Mr. Harper I have but little to say of my own knowledge. Though meeting him at the Poets' Corner, our acquaintance was never extended. Both were too reserved to make advances; and in all matters of friendship, as of love, some one must volunteer the hand. Under

these circumstances I will avail myself of an obituary notice of Mr. Harper, written in a sympathetic spirit, which appeared in the *Manchester Courier*. 'Few men have left behind them more sincere mourners. Not only was he possessed of rare talents, but he was a firm friend, a dutiful son, and as honest a man in all his dealings as ever drew the breath of heaven. For some time past his health had declined, owing chiefly to the pressure of business, but his last illness was only of a few days' duration. Alas! he was but ill adapted to the rough and hard encounters of this work-day world. Indeed his own desire was to enter the ministry of the church, but in this, friends overruled him. Far beyond the limits of his native city, he was known as one of the Lancashire poets, and by no means the least of them—as his works sufficiently testify. His earliest poetical effusion found a place in the *Courier*, in which, with the exception of his larger poems, *The Genius* [published in 1840], and *Cain and Abel* [1845], all his performances made their first appearance,—the last of the series having appeared in the *Courier* only a few weeks ago. His poetry was distinguished for its elegance and pathos, and, although simple in structure, it was full of power, and often displayed original thought. Independently of their literary merits, we have reason to know that some of his religious poems have exercised a salutary influence. He was always interested in the success of Sunday schools, and at one period of his life, in conjunction with the late Mr. Benjamin Braidley, devoted much time and attention to them. He was a zealous upholder of the constitution in Church and State, and the eloquence of some of his speeches when he was a member of the *Manchester Constitutional Association* will



not soon die out of remembrance. His true sphere, however, and that in which he was most generally known, was the literary world. Poetry was his delight and solace; and the only obstacle to a wide-spread fame in the realms of the muses, was the shrinking modesty of his nature, coupled with a simplicity of disposition which prevented the use of those arts by means of which competition so often ends in success.'

Although, while health continues, a mirthful career may be very desirable, the advantages of a well-spent life are undeniable when health declines. It is glorious, no doubt, to be the Anacreon of our day,—to compose sparkling songs, and chaunt them to jovial spirits in convivial halls; but more abiding is the comfort of him who can reflect, within the shadow of the coming night, that he has written and acted in accordance with the spirit of devotional stanzas like these that follow. They are from the pen of Mr. Harper, and appeared in the Manchester Keepsake for 1844. Few will read the lines without feeling their forcible application.

#### A DIRGE.

Thou shalt not die unwept, unsung,  
 Thy memory is blest:  
 Oh! captive from the fetters sprung,  
 Oh! weary one at rest!  
 How vain the storm, how vain the night,—  
 Thy God arose, and gave thee light.

The Spring is coming, vernal Spring,  
 Her voice is in the bowers,  
 How sweet the thrush and linnet sing;—  
 Now bring me votive flowers,  
 And I will rise at dawn of day,  
 And by thy grave go watch and pray.

Thou visitest my soul in dreams,  
 With thee I wander far,  
 O'er woody valleys ; where the streams,  
 And hidden fountains are ;  
 Until, awakening with a sigh,  
 I find thee not—yet thou art nigh !

Yes, thou art nigh ; and *they* are nigh,  
 The ministers of grace,  
 On viewless pinions as they fly  
 To bless the chosen race ;  
 Then back to heaven glad tidings bear,  
 How triumphs faith, how conquers prayer.

What scenes, thou blessed one, arise  
 Beyond the doors of death ?  
 What mystery of mysteries  
 Awaits the parting breath ?  
 I long, my God ! thyself to see :—  
 Oh, Death ! withdraw the veil from me !

His prayer is granted ; the veil is now withdrawn ; and so, in the words of his editorial friend, we sorrowfully bid farewell to William Harper.

About a mile and a half from Manchester, on the York road, there stands a beautiful church, built in the Gothic style of architecture, of the period of the fifteenth century. Situated on elevated ground, it attracts the eye at unexpected distances, wearing a sweet look from whatever point the view may be taken. The original design of this structure is stated to have been of rare beauty, but its dimensions were curtailed through motives of economy. However this may have been, the present appearance of the edifice is perfectly satisfactory. The architect, Mr. T. W. Atkinson, was formerly a working stonemason. The interior, like the exterior, is light and

elegant; and the churchyard, dotted with headstones, is also in good keeping. There is here no wealth of trees to rival Kensal Green, or garlands of everlasting to vie with *Perè la Chaise*; yet there is a sufficiency of wild herbs and scattered flowers to take from death the heart-chill which is generally attached to his presence. In this spot lies Mr. William Harper, with several members of his family. Near to the grave of Mr. Harper, and still more near to the resting-place of Mr. Joseph Maiden (one of our best animal painters, who was summoned hence just as his name was beginning to be known and his pictures appreciated, even in the metropolis), my attention was drawn to a brief epitaph on a boy near three years old. Thus it ran :

A father's hope—a mother's pride,  
Was blighted when this firstling died.

I knew this headstone told the simple truth, notwithstanding the unbelief of Lord Byron in the assertions of epitaphs generally, for the little fellow, to whose memory it is sacred, was of my acquaintance. Although every child may seem the rarest in the eyes of its parents, there is, to an impartial observer, a strong contrast in the claims of children to our loving regard. This boy was not one of the dullards. There was intelligence in his looks, and precocity in his actions, with a dash of daring in his spirit, that showed well when mixing with his playmates. I bear in mind the morning on which he sickened. When his ailment had continued a week, he called over every familiar name, and bade us, individually, a plaintive 'Ta, ta!' Little did his parents then think, though tears started to their eyes, that this was a heavenly summons—a farewell to earth. But so it proved. When

his spirit departed, and friends came to compose his limbs,—to close his laughing eyes,—to part the hair on his cold yet noble brow,—and to lay aside the white straw hat that had so often covered his curls, while allowing them to cluster round his finely-formed neck—I wept for his poor mother.

The death of the first-born has ever been a favourite theme. The poet has treated it with the holiest feeling, the painter with the tenderest touch, while the sculptor has given expression to his thoughts in the purest marble. With the exception of Mr. Alaric A. Watts, perhaps no author has written on the subject with more sweetness than Mr. Samuel Bamford, in his

LAMENT FOR MY DAUGHTER.

My angel child! my angel child!  
 Gentle, affectionate, and mild;  
 Her arms around my neck she coil'd,  
 And look'd, and wept, my angel child!  
 She wept that we so soon must part;  
 She knew that death was near her heart:  
 We were but three, O God above!  
 Couldst Thou not spare that group of love?  
 Oh, mournful hour! oh, anguish deep!  
 She, weeping, bade me not to weep;  
 And meekly in her tears she smiled,  
 Like sunbeam cast on ruin wild.  
 Sweet flowers unto her grave I bring,  
 To bloom, to die, in early Spring;  
 All pure, and beautiful, and mild,  
 Like my lost dove, my angel child!

HER EPITAPH.

To the gentle and blest,  
 Who hath come to her rest,  
 An offering meet  
 In season appears;

All beautiful and sweet,  
Flowers, nursed in tears.

The flowery grave thus poetically promised for the stricken girl was pleasantly realised by her father, in the cemetery attached to Middleton church. In the summer of 1841 Mr. Bamford led a party of literary friends to view the place; and two of those friends, Mr. Prince and Mr. Rogerson, have recorded in verse their impressions of the genial visit. A perusal of those poems induced a wish on my part to look at the planted mound, and I took an opportunity of gratifying my desire, in the loitering and desultory manner described in the pages next ensuing.



W. H. W. W.

ING at leisure, and my humour proving decidedly outward bound, I treated myself, one fine morning in early summer, to a country ramble in the direction of Middleton. While strolling forth to the suburbs the air was just sharp enough to sharpen everybody with whom it came in contact. Flaring new erections surrounded me on all sides; bricks and trowels were pealing

like bells at a festival, proclaiming, as may be supposed, the

triumph of art over nature. It is by no means difficult to perceive the ultimate fate of our woods and fields, which are already far enough removed from townsmen. Step by step, houses and railways will continue to encroach, until the sylvan territories are deprived of a local habitation, and scarcely retain a name, except in pastorals. But a truce to reflection amidst building materials, while there are yet meadows at hand for sunbeams to gild, and for fairies to dance upon—when they condescend. Diverging from the highway, and surmounting Job's Stile, I passed alongside the fields that bear the old farmer's name. Years ago, this was a favourite resort of the shop apprentice, or the warehouse clerk, who came hither in the early mornings of spring-time, to inhale the bracing air; in summer, to watch the mowers; in autumn and in winter also, he was a frequent visitor, if only to make a fool of himself—to himself—for the sake of gymnastic exercise. At the most retired end of the field-path was placed another stile; one of those broad, easy, old-fashioned structures that seem to ask you to rest and indulge in a loving day-dream. Often was the implied invitation accepted. And wisely too; for dreamland is our Utopia, our Arcadia, our Golden Age. In real life, whatever our station, we are apt, as Shelley observed, to 'look before and after, and pine for what is not;' but in the land of dreams the heart finds the millennium it can never discover in its pilgrimage through the world. The last of those fanciful excursions at that spot has, however, been taken. The stile is now removed—the telegraphic communication with the elf and the fay destroyed. The place is disenchanted, like Bottom after his midsummer dream.

Talk of Peas-blossom, Robin Goodfellow, and Company! No wonder they vanished, even from the imagination, for law has invaded their suburban territory, and lawyers have affixed a ban in these horribly legal terms: 'Manchester to Wit. Notice is hereby given, that it is the intention of the Council of the City of Manchester, under and by virtue of the powers contained in the Manchester General Improvement Act, to STOP UP and ENCLOSE all that path or way in the township of Cheetham, in the said city, usually called Job's Stile Path, and leading from a street called York-street to a road or way leading out of a street in the said township, called Smedley Lane. Dated this twenty-ninth day of July, 1859.' After such formal warning no romantic rambler need henceforth look about the region of Job's Stile Path for soft-eyed fay or moonlight reveller. The dainty couchers upon rose leaves will keep aloof from musty parchment.

There can be no better theme for reflection than the rapid disappearance of our favourite places of resort, and of the companions who occasionally shared our diversions. Formerly, the Stile Path that pleased the father would please the son, and so remain. But we live in a faster age; change under the name of improvement predominates, and while we write of the passing it is past—of the going, it is gone. The man who, in these railway times, would linger to the age of Methuselah, must be content to dwell in a new world; neither familiar scenes, nor early friends, will stay to bear him company.

With more speed and less rumination I passed the wayside well—which is ever a wayside charm—and pursued my quiet journey. A junction of three lane ends, with a quaint,

fingered directory in the centre, brought me into contact with an elderly man and a troop of playful boys and girls, who took the same path with myself. I hailed the old gentleman with a passing remark on the original topic—the undying one—the weather, and found some reason to be satisfied in thus hailing. A blessing be with thee, constant yet ever-changing weather! Thou universal friendship-made-easy! How would the silent system chill our highways and byeways—how many choice spirits would boggle in their attempts to be sociable, were it not for thy aid? Our brief introduction over, we walked cheerfully along, chatting upon every imaginable topic, the youngsters meanwhile frolicking, at intervals, a long way ahead, or astern. Ere we had proceeded far in this joyous manner, we came unexpectedly upon the moping idiot of the village. Regarding for a moment his vacant gaze, his aimless motions, the lengthy beard-down covering his chin, the blue frock encasing his person, we resumed our ramble with strange feelings, the chief being gratitude for the right use of our own reason. After a short stage of involuntary silence, my companion and his juvenile guard turned off to the left; but their absence was relieved by the loud piping of a throstle, and the music of other singing birds. As I skirted the Woodlands and Crumpsall Green towards the deep vale of Blackley, an angler, furnished with rod and basket, and hastening, possibly, to some Cheshire mere,—a sportsman, with his dog and gun, peering for a stray bird,—gave further diversity to the landscape, and brought welcome reminders of Izaak Walton, and Love in a Village. The breeze, too, continued its liveliness, rushing onward in a volatile and coquettish manner, often alluring me with a



wild visionary canzonet, to follow its invisible guidance. Of course the aerial challenge was accepted in the spirit of its own briskness, and we bounded away in pleasant companionship—the breeze and I—past many a quiet lane and many bits of country scenery, dewy and verdant, until at length we reached the village of Middleton.

Middleton church is precisely the structure we expect to find in a rural district—small and simple; possessing, too, something of the look and charm of hoary antiquity. In the front wall of this edifice I remarked a stone slab—a ruined sun-dial—bearing an inscription, *LOSE NO TIME*, which told well upon a monitor that years had worn almost to dust. But the object of my visit—the Floral Grave, reared by Samuel Bamford over the remains of his only daughter—lay in the adjacent cemetery. So crossing a narrow sandy lane, and stopping for a moment to examine the primitive stocks (partly sunken, and rusty from disuse), the mound in question was soon reached. It was easily and beautifully distinguished from its silent neighbours, being supported all round by branches, placed crossways, over which drooped a border of wild flowers. The centre was studded with Forget-me-nots, those bonnie mementos which never plead in vain to our sympathies.

O'er that lone consecrated spot the wild grass waveth fair,  
And sweeter flowers perfume her grave than marble tombs may rear;  
And surely doth the nameless dust receive the noblest dower,  
For man, vain man, erects the tomb, but God bequeaths the flower.

Sweet is her rest! I left the child, with grateful glance on high,  
To Him who, watching o'er the poor, still guards them when they die;  
And joy may sparkle in our eyes, however prone to weep,  
To know that, through the Saviour's blood, our lost ones do but sleep.\*

\* SYLVAN.

Scarcely can there be a more forcible illustration of the parable of the lion lying down with the lamb, than this mound and its builder afford. Although the sturdy veteran is still moving amongst us in the flesh, he has here lain down in spirit with his sleeping child.

While gazing with interest on the simple cluster of flowers, I was pleasantly reminded of the ancient custom of grave planting; which still prevails in many parts of the Principality, and also in a few isolated districts of England. Shakespeare, who alludes to all things, has aptly alluded to these votive offerings, in the fourth act of *Cymbeline* :

‘ With fairest flowers,  
 Whilst summer lasts, and I live here, Fidele,  
 I’ll sweeten thy sad grave ; thou shalt not lack  
 The flower that’s like thy face, pale primrose, nor  
 The leaf of eglantine, whom, not to slander,  
 Outsweeten’d not thy breath.’

Mr. Bamford is known as one of the most prominent of the Lancashire bards, a band of self-elevated men, and women too. As a class, they have been earnest lovers of literature, for its own sake; bidding the flowers of fancy to bloom, however faintly, in the densest of smoke and chemical miasma, even where nature failed to nurture a bud or preserve her adventurous leaves. In their hours of leisure, our bards have yielded the blandishments of poetry to soften the stern realities of commerce; further, they have brightened the depressing hours of poverty by weaving, ever and anon, the wild witcheries of romance. Thus have they made for themselves a name whereby to be remembered.

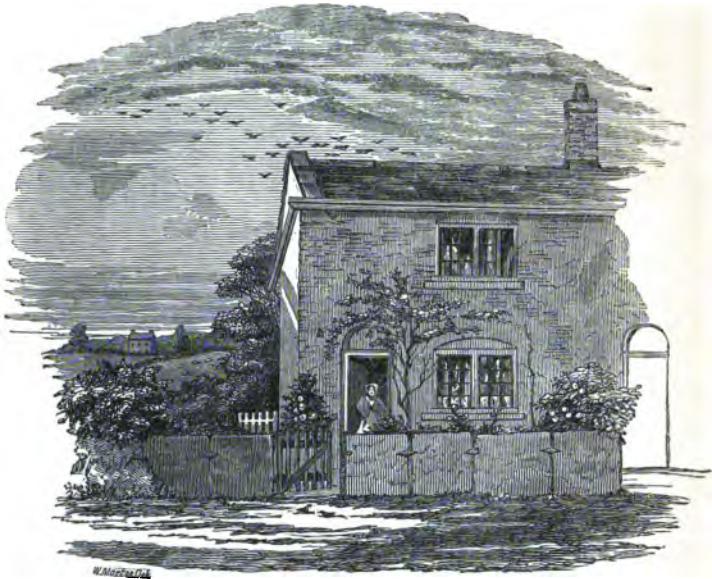
While some critics pronounce Mr. Bamford to be essentially a poet, superior even to Prince, Swain, and Rogerson com-

bined, other reviewers refute those extreme assertions, contending that prose is his forte, and that from prose he must reap his honours. Midway between the heights of over-laudation on the one hand, and the depths of disparagement on the other, will be found, I presume, Mr. Bamford's true position as a poet. But whatever difference of opinion may exist regarding his written poetry, there can be no divided views concerning the poet-action revealed in Middleton churchyard. The Floral Grave will cling tenaciously to my recollection.

The accompanying extract (written in the summer of 1851,) from the London correspondence of the *Manchester Guardian*, may prove interesting as a sequel to the foregone remarks: 'I saw Samuel Bamford passing along Fleet-street the other day, and hastily concluded that he had come up to see the Exhibition, but it turns out that he has come to settle in the 'Fog-Babylon.' I am told that he has obtained a situation at Somerset House, which will enable him and his aged partner to pass the evening of their days in comfort. I am heartily glad to hear of this fortunate passage in the life of so worthy a radical. In looking after him as he shouldered his way through Temple Bar, in a very characteristic style, I could not help thinking on the marvellous change which has taken place in England since his first appearance in London, thirty-four years ago. On the thirtieth of March, 1817, Samuel Bamford was brought from Manchester to London, on a charge of high treason; and, after having been examined several times before the privy council, by Lord Sidmouth and others, was finally discharged on the thirtieth of April. The patrons of Oliver, Edwards, Richmond, and other spies

of that dark period have all vanished out of sight, leaving no very fragrant memory behind them; while Bamford, who had nearly fallen a victim to their machinations, still preserves a hale appearance.'

Soon after the publication of this newspaper paragraph, Mr. Bamford paid a short visit to his local residence, for the purpose of selling its contents, and of taking his farewell of the district he had so long traversed.



SAM<sup>L</sup> BAMFORD'S COTTAGE NEAR BOGFART-HO KLOOF.

## PART III.

## SUNDRY GRAVES AND EPITAPHS.



BECOMING weary of land, and anxious for a change of element, I resolved, in an adventurous moment, upon making a voyage down the Irwell, and entertained a distant idea of exploring even the Mersey. In accordance with this resolution, a berth was secured on board the Old Quay Company's tiny steamer, Jack-sharp, which plied daily between Manchester and Warrington. Luckily, our steersman was not one of the genuine bulldog species who usually do the honours of river navigation, but partook more of the social qualities attributed to Lord Byron's boatman, and entertained me, as I stood by his side, with various local traditions. One of these, though far from being new, may please by its wildness. 'At Hale,' he commenced—'Excuse the interruption, sir,' said I, 'but where is Hale situated?' 'Hale,' he continued, 'is three or four miles from the Snig Pie House, which stands exactly opposite the Quay, at Runcorn. Well, there once lived at this place a poor half-witted lad, who was jeered and tormented by other 'lads of the village,' until his life became miserable. At

length he shunned their company, and strolled forth every morning into the neighbouring wood—where nothing mocked his weakness—to gather filberts, or pluck wild flowers, or chase butterflies, until darkness forced him homeward. One day, exceeding his usual boundary, he came to the sands, where he knelt, and prayed to become a powerful giant, in order that he might be avenged on his heartless enemies. Taking up a shell, he drew the coveted size deeply into the sand. Soon afterwards a strange drowsiness coming over him, he lay within the lines, and fell asleep. When the sun went down, and its beams departed from his eyes, he awoke, and behold! his wish was gratified to the full. From that moment he went forth the redoubtable 'Childe of Hale,' whose curious grave is still pointed out in the churchyard, and whose tremendous portrait, placed as an inn sign, is well calculated to teach every urchin within the sphere of its influence a lesson worthy of remembrance, namely, that 'A still tongue showeth a wise head.' My informant forgot to name the exact date of the above-recorded miracle, and I, in my eagerness to listen, forgot to ask the question. I have since gleaned that the 'Childe of Hale' was John Middleton, born in 1578, and buried in Hale churchyard in 1623; and that Sir Gilbert Ireland, in 1617, took him up to the court of King James the First, where he wrestled with the king's wrestler, and put out his opponent's thumb, the king rewarding him with twenty pounds. There is a picture of this gigantic personage in the library of Brazenose College, Oxford; and another at Hale Hall. The height of Middleton was nine feet three inches, inferior only by six inches to the stature of Goliath, the colossean warrior of Holy Writ.

In a general way the Jacksharp proved, I believe, a sprightly little thing, but on the occasion alluded to it reversed its ordinary evolutions, and became a provoking Jackslow. When near the end of our trip one of the cog wheels broke; the steamer being thus rendered useless, was yoked to a flat—the express drawn by a dray horse!—and we were towed into Warrington amid the laughter and gibes of everybody capable of appreciating a good practical joke.

Proceeding almost immediately by the fly, or swift packet, to Runcorn, I was much pleased with the fly, and also with the country through which it passed. My perceptive faculties must have been quick at that period, or they have failed me since, for I repeated the sail some time afterwards, and such a monotonous affair I would not willingly endure again.

Runcorn was a quiet little town, with an old-fashioned aspect, and possessing an ancient church. On my second visit I found the interesting pile under condemnation; placards were posted, announcing the last sermon within its walls; and workmen were busily employed in removing the tablets and other memorials from the interior. Among the rest was a beautiful medallion portrait of the late Sir Richard Brooke, of Norton Priory, whose family vault has been situated here for generations past. As I paced the aisles the rain came through the roof, and the entire fabric was so delapidated as to force one of two conclusions—either to build a new structure on the site, or leave the old edifice to decay by piecemeal, and erect another elsewhere. After much difference of opinion the former course was adopted, although a generous maiden lady proffered eight hundred

pounds as an inducement for its age and monuments to be spared. In the churchyard were two skeleton yew trees, which appeared to have stood coeval with the church, the trunk of one of them being scalloped out in the form of an Indian canoe, or a lidless coffin. A multitude of tombs and headstones, sunken into fantastic shapes, overlooked the tide-fed river.

The epitaphs in this churchyard are very numerous, and mostly remarkable—many for worth, some for worthlessness. An example of each class may be given, the worst receiving a not unusual precedence:—

It pleased the Lord to cut the thread of life,  
Of this a loving and a virtuous wife ;  
In bringing forth an offspring was the case,  
And now both rests quite easy in this place ;  
In hopes hereafter to arise to bliss,  
Where Christ the Lord and all his Angels is.

Verily, a public censor seems as requisite for the burial-ground as for the theatre. The glance of a judicious eye would detect unsightly errors, and prevent people from expending their money only to be ridiculed. For this service no government aid or supervision is needed; the improvement may be easily accomplished if every minister of the gospel would take especial cognizance of his own churchyard: a subject not unworthy of his best attention. Let us be sensible, or touching, or beautiful in our tributes to the dead,—or be nothing. Silence, surely, is a positive virtue in comparison with ignorance perpetuated in stone.

Sweet is the sunbeam after rain. How pleasant is the contrast formed by this poetical tribute, paid to the memory of a young wife:—



Say, shall the form o'er which we weep,  
 Lie buried in eternal sleep?  
 Shall nought its faded sweets restore,—  
 Or have they droop'd to bloom no more?  
 O no! in more congenial lands,  
 Transplanted by a Father's hands,  
 The expanding bud, by heaven array'd,  
 Now blooms a flower no more to fade.

While on the subject of buried 'partners for life' I may as well relieve my mind of a crotchet. Whenever, in reading churchyard inscriptions, the eye rests on one to this effect—'Mary Brown, relict of the above John Green'—clearly indicating the widow had re-married, and yet been buried with her former husband, there is apparent, to my fancy, a lack of poetic justice. Without expecting the romantic love that lasts through time unto death in the singleness and purity of its first devotion, and without consigning a widow to lonely poverty where second marriage is her only method of insuring comfort, I would nevertheless stipulate that every woman so re-marrying should confine herself entirely to her latest lord; never intruding her dust, or her new name, into the grave or upon the stone of him whose memory she has deserted.

By way of example and guidance in the construction of epitaphs, I will here introduce one—long a favourite with me—which appears in the churchyard of St. George-in-the-Fields, Manchester:—

Just to the world in each degree,  
 The world was never just to thee;  
 Strange to the elder's sere grey hair,  
 Thou suffer'd more than old man's care;  
 Peace to the wrong'd of heart and mind!  
 God is great, though fate be blind.

On quitting Runcorn for Liverpool, in the steamer *Blanche*, we were assailed by a provoking shower; and not fancying a war with the elements, I retreated with the majority of the passengers into the cabin, where the contrast was cheering. A roaring fire shot its rays over a crowd of thankful faces, while a fiddler of the old school sang quaint ditties to his instrument; volunteers followed in his wake, and two hours passed merrily. Arrived at St. George's pier, we were requested to turn out of our 'little heaven below,' into a storm of rain that threatened to drown us. As there was no choice, save the proverbial one of Hobson's, each made the best of his way to his own home, or to a borrowed one, as the case might be.

I found an agreeable refuge from the storm in the concert room of Jem Ward, where music and wine blended their attractions, while the ex-champion passed to and fro in good-humoured attendance upon his visitors. I like to see champions, in whatever direction their genius may lie; and when the forte happens, as in this instance, to be fisticuffs, it is always best to encounter the belt wearer in his sociable moods. Such position is peculiar, reminding one of the fable of *Æsop*, and of the comfortable sensations of the lamb, when he and the wolf were friends. On another occasion I saw this same Black Diamond put forth his science, though not his strength, in the Carpenters' Hall, Manchester. Old Ned Painter, being ill and unfortunate, had announced a benefit night. The fancy and the public responded freely to the call. Ward came specially from Liverpool in order to wind-up with the veteran. There were also present Dick Davies, Young Norley, the Ebony Phenomenon, and many other

fistic celebrities of the district; most of whom have since been laid low by the universal conqueror, Death. The mimic fight between Ward and Painter was a curious sight to see. The first, square and burly, appeared a picture of rude health; the second was something taller, but slender, gentle, and advanced in years. Though thus presenting a great disparity, the men proceeded merrily with the bout; the strong being forbearing, and the feeble good tempered. In looking at Painter, whose face was mantled with a continual smile, it was difficult to conceive that he had once been a thirteen-stone bruiser, and the vanquisher of England's model champion—Tom Spring. Yet such he undoubtedly was; and they say that

‘In his prime,  
Ere the pruning-knife of Time  
Cut him down,  
Not a better man was found  
By the crier on his round  
Through the town.’\*

After his benefit, Painter returned to Norwich, where he had resided the greater portion of his life, and where he died, after a lengthened illness, on the eighteenth of September, 1852. I have been thus particular concerning honest Ned because he was a sapling oak of our own rearing; being born, in 1784, within three miles of Manchester, at the village of Stretford, so renowned for its manufacture of turf and black puddings.

Rising betime after a sleepless night, an early stroll in the morning sunshine brought me to St. James's churchyard, where Mr. Edward Rushton lies at rest. With any preten-

\* Oliver Wendell Holmes.

sion to literary taste, or sympathy with departed worth, I could not refrain from taking a peep at his gravestone. An application to the clerk, and a little timely appliance of his spade and brush, revealed the ensuing inscription, on a plain slab, close to the wall in St. James's Street:—

Here mouldering in the dust lies Isabella, wife of Edward Rushton, who died 31st Jany, 1811, aged 56 years. Here also lies Ann Rushton, daughter of the above Edward and Isabella, who died 25th May, 1811, aged twenty years. In all the endearing relations of Wife, Mother, Daughter, and Sister, these much lamented characters have rarely been excelled.

Finding no mention of Mr. Rushton's decease, even on his own stone, I had recourse to the burial register, and copied its record for the gratification of my curiosity: 'Edward Rushton, Paradise Street, Liverpool, died 25th Novr. 1814, age, 58.'

The incidents of Mr. Rushton's career are more varied and interesting than is usual in the lives of literary men. Born on the eleventh of November, 1756, in John Street, Liverpool, he early became enamoured of the ships that constantly reared their masts beside him. At the age of ten he was bound apprentice to a sea-faring life, and performed his various duties with skill and credit. Arriving at his sixteenth year, he received the thanks of the captain and crew for his noble conduct during a storm. While yet in his apprenticeship, he became second mate of the vessel in which he had entered as cabin boy, and when in this situation, in the West Indies, he was despatched from the ship with a boat's crew to the shore, from which the vessel was then lying some miles distant. Within about three miles of Jamaica

the boat upset, and five or six men were left to struggle for their lives. In a short time the boat turned keel upwards, upon which they all mounted; but no sooner had they become seated, and congratulated each other on their escape, than the boat slipped from under them, and they were again left to the mercy of the waves. One of the party was a negro, between whom and Rushton a friendship existed, for Rushton had taught the negro to read. When the boat disappeared, Rushton beheld a small cask, which he knew contained fresh water, but before he could reach it, the cask was seized by the negro, who, on seeing Rushton almost exhausted, thrust the envied prize towards him, turned away his head, bidding him good bye, and was never more seen. This cask saved Rushton's life, and he often told the story with tears in his eyes.\* At the expiration of his apprenticeship he proceeded to the coast of Africa on a slaving voyage. When he beheld the horrors of this traffic, he expressed his sentiments of it with that boldness and integrity which characterised all his actions. On this voyage he was attacked by a violent inflam-

\* For this and other incidents in the life of Mr. Rushton I am indebted to the *Biography of the Blind*, a literary curiosity, by JAMES WILSON, an intelligent, venerable-looking man, with whom I once had the pleasure of spending an evening at my own fireside. In being constantly 'a foot,' he resembled his wayward countryman, Bayard Taylor; though latterly his perigrinations had been not so much from country to country as from author to author. He shared with Lieutenant Holman the title of the *Blind Traveller*, and his wife accompanied him in the character of the blind man's guide. Upon leaving my house, Mr. Wilson journeyed along the great north road, passing through the romantic region of Westmoreland and Cumberland, and onward to the Scottish Border. He never returned, dying shortly afterwards, aged about seventy.

mation of the eyes, which in three weeks left him totally blind, at the age of nineteen. How much he felt his privation he has beautifully expressed in his Ode to Blindness. A few cheerless years passed, when he married, and shortly afterwards became editor of a newspaper, a situation that brought him much pleasure, but little profit. With thirty guineas, five children, and a wife to whose exertions he was greatly indebted, he next commenced bookselling. The business succeeded, for Rushton and his wife were attentive and frugal. Not long, however, were they allowed to remain easy; political feeling ran very high in Liverpool, and as Rushton, in speaking and in writing, was earnest and outspoken, he became a marked man, and suffered accordingly. Still, he was rich in the warm and enduring friendship of such men as Roscoe, Rathbone, Cowdroy, and Ryley, the Itinerant. In the summer of 1807, after enduring five operations at the hands of a Manchester oculist, he received his sight, though totally eclipsed during more than thirty years. Towards the close of his life Mr. Rushton's health visibly declined, and he consequently made little use of his pen, but his usual cheerfulness was preserved to the last. The works of Rushton are not numerous, being confined to a small duodecimo volume published in London, in 1806; his Letters to General Washington, and to Thomas Paine; with the poetical pieces scattered through the periodicals and newspapers of his day. His last poem was dedicated to friendship, being a monody on the death of Mr. Cowdroy. This was written in August, 1814; within three months of that date the mourner's place in the world was left vacant, and St. James's churchyard received its principal source of attraction.

## LAMENT FOR WILLIAM COWDROY.

Ye lovers of social delights,  
 Whose bosoms are mild and humane,  
 Ah! pause from your perilous rites,  
 And mark for a moment my strain.  
 Poor Cowdroy, by nature endow'd  
 With talents to please and illum'd,  
 To nature's dread fiat has bow'd,  
 And silently sunk to the tomb.

There are who remember his powers,  
 Ere his nerves by decay were unstrung ;  
 Who remember how night's witching hours  
 By his fancies were speeded along ;  
 Who remember his eloquent eye,  
 And those lips where benevolence play'd ;  
 And these, with true feeling, shall sigh  
 O'er the turf where their favourite is laid.

I know there are minds who disdain  
 The verse that extols the obscure ;  
 But if fortunes were measured by brain  
 What numbers of these would be poor.  
 The treasures poor Cowdroy possess'd  
 Were funds of wit, humour, and whim ;  
 And thousands with plums may be blest,  
 For one that is favoured like him.

As the elephant's trunk can upraise  
 The trees of the forest or straws ;  
 So Cowdroy could pun on a phrase,  
 Or could advocate freedom's great cause.  
 If hate ever rankled his breast,  
 'Twas against the dark foes of mankind ;  
 And each chain that erodes the oppress'd  
 'Twas the wish of his soul to unbind.

His heart was the seat of the dove ;  
 There gentleness found her abode ;  
 And like the bright day-star, his love  
 For the whole human family glow'd.  
 But that bosom, with feeling once fraught,  
 And that tongue, the dispenser of mirth,  
 And those eyes, ever beaming with thought,  
 All, all are descended to earth.

Having read this well-merited lament for our worthy journalist of a former day, we may now fittingly adjourn to his grave, in St. Mark's churchyard, Cheetham Hill, near Manchester; and there read his brief epitaph, as it appears at the foot of a simple stone which covers various branches of the Cowdroy family :—

William Cowdroy, twenty years Editor and Proprietor of the Manchester Gazette, departed this life Augst. 10th, 1814, aged 62 years.

Returning from the grave of Cowdroy to the resting-place of Rushton, and pursuing my way up St. James's Street, Liverpool, I soon reached the Mount, where an agreeable view is presented of the town, the river, and the shipping. From the Mount, a few downward steps introduced me to the Cemetery, which, placed at the bottom of a deep dell, formerly a sand quarry, appears singular and striking. In the centre of its many tombs, trees, and flowers, stands the mausoleum of the Right Hon. William Huskisson, M.P., who was killed at Parkside, at the opening of the Liverpool and Manchester Railway. On the pedestal supporting the statue of the unfortunate statesman is briefly inscribed—

William Huskisson, born March xith, MDCLXX., died September xv., MDCCCXXX.

I gazed with some interest on this imposing monument,



for the day of Huskisson's fall and of Stephenson's triumph was fresh in my remembrance. It was a grand holiday in Manchester, especially in the neighbourhood of Cross Lane Bridge, whence I watched the wonderful advent of steam. The bridge and its approaches were more thronged than Kersall Moor used to be, even when the Gold Cup was raced for; and such a plentiful display of eatables and drinkables has rarely been seen. Every point of view along the line of railway was similarly crowded, for many thousands had left their work or their homes to gaze for the first time on a locomotive at full speed. It was also the 'gay day' of nature as well as of art, the sun shining with great brilliance over the merry groups. The Duke of Wellington, and other magnates, added to the attraction by their presence; but these I failed to recognise as they passed. One of them, indeed, had been killed before reaching our locality; and as I now, after the lapse of so many years, surveyed his splendid sepulchre, a vision of that sunny day, with its one black shadow, rose vividly before me.

Up the hill to Everton! Here, as a matter of course, the far-famed toffy-shop was patronized to a small extent; for who that has a child, or has been a child, could resist the sweet temptation?

At mid-day (Saturday, September 15, 1849,) I stood near the jail, at Kirkdale, and witnessed a public execution for the first and only time. The condemned was Maurice Gleeson, alias John Gleeson Wilson; his crime was the murder of Mrs. Henrichson, her two children, and female servant. This wholesale slaughter was committed without provocation, almost without motive, and Gleeson's guilt was clear beyond

doubt ; so pity for his fate did not mingle with the gazers' emotions. The crowd was immense, calculators said twenty thousand. When the executioner withdrew the bolt, the drop fell with a loud crash that I was unprepared for, and the sufferer was pitched headlong, until the cord jerked him back ; he then turned half-round, his head sank upon his left shoulder, and he ceased to move. I thought of quietly leaving the ground before the multitude had satisfied its curiosity, but when the attempt was made I found everybody impressed with the same steal-a-march idea ; consequently a scene of wild crushing ensued which alarmed me, and with reason ; for had any person been pressed into one of the ruts or hollows of those meadows, the danger was imminent that he would not have risen. By degrees the throng dispersed to its myriad homes, leaving, fortunately, neither slain nor wounded upon the field.

From Kirkdale, a mile walk on a good highway led me to the rural churchyard of Walton-on-the-Hill, where the waves lash the shore in a wailing and picturesque manner. On approaching the gate my attention was attracted by the parish stocks, invitingly fresh, and ready for immediate use. Feeling rather weary, I seated myself on the form dedicated to vagrants and viragos. In this novel position I rested, and ruminated on Sir Hudibras, Ralpho, and other luckless heroes who had heretofore honoured the stocks with their illustrious presence. Observing the sexton engaged in preparing a narrow house for a new tenant, I left the place of cheap and simple punishment, and entered into conversation with him. On being desired to point out the grave of John Palmer, the Actor, he promptly did so, and had an anecdote

to tell me of an old gentleman, a friend of Palmer's, who never failed to visit the grave whenever business or pleasure called him to those parts; though he feared he must now be dead, many years having elapsed since he last saw him. Without the sexton's aid my search would have been attended with difficulty. It proved to be a public grave, denoted by the usual flat stone, and bearing four lines of lettering, two at the top, two at the bottom, the entire centre being left plain; the bottom line,

JOHN PALMER, Esq.

was all that appertained to the departed player. It was the original intention of his theatrical friends to add, 'There is another and a better world,' but that intention was never, it appears, carried into execution; although it might have been done with great propriety, and at little expense. In the beginning of the present century, our eccentric little doctor, James Watson, stood in a reverential spirit on this spot; and forgetful for the time being of the 'quips, and cranks, and wreathed smiles' by which we best remember him, soberly moralised in rhyme. Nowhere could the moralist find a more fitting subject for reflection. John Palmer was the Don Juan of the stage, and of real life. His personal appearance is described as being peculiarly fascinating: among men, he moved as a superior being; among women, as a male syren. Yet not by his progress through life's drama, brilliant though it was, but rather by his solemn and startling exit from it, was his name impressed upon the public mind. The last of his provincial engagements was at Liverpool, in 1798, and while here, news came of the death of his favourite son, which so much distressed him that the performance was

postponed. On the following day, the second of August, Palmer resumed his duties in the character of the Stranger, and while uttering the remarkable words, 'There is another and a better world,' his feelings overpowered him, and he fell lifeless on the stage. The audience imagined it was a stage trick, and applauded; but when the body was removed, Charles Incedon came forward to explain the mournful reality. In the opinion of the doctors, Palmer died of a broken heart; such was also the belief of the public. Few local events have created a greater sensation, or have been more frequently alluded to in print. A free benefit performance was given at the Liverpool theatre for Mr. Palmer's orphan children, when a poetical address, written by Mr. William Roscoe, was delivered by Mr. Holman. The amount received was greater than had ever been known at that theatre; after deducting funeral expences, a balance remained of four hundred and twelve pounds.\* The theatre was closed during three days, when the funeral took place. The hearse was preceded by four mourning coaches—all the town could furnish—and was followed by Messrs. Aickin (the manager), Whitfield, Incedon, Mattocks, Farley, Emery, Holman, and the remainder of the company. Simply inscribed, 'Mr. John Palmer, aged 53,' the coffin was lowered into the grave, which was dug in a rock, to the depth of seven feet. An engaging portrait of Mr. Palmer, in his favourite character of Don John, appears in Oxberry's Dramatic Biography. The company performing at Palmer's unexpected farewell was strong and attractive; among the ladies was Miss Mellon,

\* For the same laudable purpose a free benefit was likewise given at Drury Lane, which realized, including presents, eight hundred pounds.

afterwards Duchess of St. Albans, and to that professional visit she thus frankly refers in her Memoirs: 'When I was a poor girl, working very hard for my thirty shillings a-week, I went down to Liverpool during the holidays, where I was always kindly received.' Of Palmer's friends, one of the most active, both at his fall and at his funeral, was Charles Incledon, who has been truly described as 'the best English singer that ever stepped between trap and lamp.' Certainly, none could ever chaunt so gloriously those genuine old songs,—those British Yeomen of lyrics,—which, superior to the vicissitudes of fashion, ought to be ever welcome in our ears. Did some four-leaved shamrock, the wand of Merlin, or any other fairy favour or magic talisman, give to me the power of calling back to earth one shade of the departed, upon Charles Incledon my choice would rest. Once more, as in his early day, he should take the musical world by surprise with *Bonny Bet*, *Sweet Blossom*, and *The Lads of the Village*;—once more startle the fawns in the greenwood with loud echoing of *Tom Moody*, and *Old Towler*; as he startled them at the merry hunting dinners of yore, when surrounded by such rare over-proof spirits as *John Mytton*, *Colonel Mellish*, the 'Squire,' and *Colonel Thornton*; again, too, should he sing the *Jolly Young Waterman*, and *Black-eyed Susan*, as heartily and sympathetically as when he absented himself from the port admiral's table in order to sing these characteristic lyrics to his brother sailors on the lower deck; nor should he fail to repeat his magnificent rendering of *The Storm*; though he never should give it in the fulness of his sorrowing heart, as he gave it, a volunteer, at the *Kemble banquet*; finally, as his end drew near, he

should once more call his family around him, and, swan-like, sing them a favourite strain as his farewell to earth. Who but would like to listen to such parting song? In the event of business or pleasure leading me to Worcester—where his melodious pipe was hushed—there are three things in that antiquated city which will rivet my attention; to wit: the battle-field of Cromwell and Charles the Second; the battle-field of Spring and Langan; and the grave of the 'Wandering Melodist,' Charles Benjamin Incedon. Incedon's fortunate rival, Braham, I once heard at a public concert, in his old age, and my disappointment was great. He sang several of his popular ballads, Death of Nelson, Bay of Biscay, Molly Bawn, and others, but no singing power remained, not a vestige of the greatness attributed to him by his eulogists.

Returning towards evening from Walton-on-the-Hill, I crossed the ferry to Birkenhead, and found myself alone in the old priory, notwithstanding the village was crowded with visitors. The ruin, though small, is picturesque, and the spirit of the olden time has not quite deserted it. The shadows and the comparative silence soothed me into deep thought, which humour was indulged until the moon peered through the ivied and broken arches. A noon-day glance at Birkenhead priory, on another occasion, disappointed me. The ivy looked scanty, the walls naked, and altogether it appeared less romantic than I was willing to believe. Ruins are deeply indebted to evening for their effect, and shrewd was the advice of Sir Walter Scott to all lovers of Melrose, to shun the 'garish day' and time their visits by the pale moonlight. In the interval, the village had undergone a marked alteration. Huge docks and other erections were

springing to sight with rapidity, in spirited rivalry of its gigantic neighbour on the opposite side of the Mersey. Among the tombs and inscriptions in the precincts of the priory was that of Thomas Rayneford, its last prior but one, who died May 20, 1473. In the year 1818, it appears, his ancient gravestone was dug up within the ruins; underneath were found three skeletons, in very perfect condition. The stone is now inserted in the wall; it resembles red granite, and is much corroded. Many letters of the inscription, which runs around the margin, are effaced, and it is with considerable difficulty that the meaning is rendered intelligible. A final leave may be taken of Birkenhead priory (which is now enclosed) and its adjacent epitaphs with the ensuing memorial verse, of plaintive beauty:—

Thus mourning o'er this stone I bend,  
Which covers all that was a friend;—  
And from his voice, his hand, his smile,  
Divides me for a little while.

Thus musing and lingering in the Wirral peninsula, it was easy and right to remember that RYLEY, the Itinerant, together with his wife, were buried within that narrow neck of land, which separates, for twenty miles, the tidal waters of the Mersey from those of the Dee. Very early in my reading career, the Itinerant, or *Memoirs of an Actor*, had been eagerly devoured, and often had I renewed my acquaintance with its desultory pages, as with an agreeable friend. I had also read *Fanny Fitz-York, Heiress of Tremorne*, by Ann Ryley; a cleverly-written novel, of considerable interest, especially to women. Though *Fanny Fitz-York* is now unknown to the majority of modern readers, who, in their eager pursuit of

something new, are apt to overlook the treasures of the past, it still has an abiding place in the circulating library. Here the curious may find this slighted heroine of romance, this forgotten belle of a season, taking her natural rest, half buried in kindred dust, and literally shelved; yet retaining a brief obituary record, a sort of monumental inscription, in that useful though commonplace guardian of many memories—the librarian's catalogue. For any thoughtful writer there is no better theme than this same miscellaneous, finger-worn catalogue. O'Keeffe has shown us that the world may be compressed into a village, but here is a greater marvel—the world's epitome in an every-day hand-book. With this hint to authors in search of a subject, I may begin my easy pilgrimage to Ryley's grave and residence, by taking a seat in an early train for Hooton, distant seven miles from Birkenhead. Leaving a forest of masts on the left, and on the right the quaint church of Bebbington, which is worthy of more than a passing glance, the green fields and plentiful trees of Hooton were soon reached. Here is situated the well-known seat of Sir William Massey-Stanley, rendered familiar to me by means of a running horse, which, some years ago, and with varied fortune, carried the name of this mansion and village over our neighbouring race-courses. The next stage was to Neston, distant about four miles, across the peninsula. As there was no conveyance to this retired place, I walked pleasantly along the well-kept road, which shortly wound through a tiny cluster of homesteads and farmsteads forming the hamlet of Willaston, a sweetly-secluded spot that won from the townsman, in passing, many an approving look. As I advanced, the road became less



formal, the hedgerows less prim; and blackberries—pleasant wildings—tempted my hand to their prickly recesses. Laying these way-side annuals under occasional tribute, I proceeded leisurely through a district described by Pennant as a comparative desert, and by Ryley as a modern Paradise. The medium proved, as usual, nearest the truth. Here, a brown heath, or hilly tract, justified Pennant; there, a richly-clothed dingle, or waving corn land, gave testimony for Ryley. Two or three windmills, also, gaily painted, flapped their sails in favour of the Itinerant. By dint of various loud enquiries addressed to husbandmen labouring a-field, and to cotters trimming their gardens, I reached the last turn of the road to Neston. The scenery now rapidly changed. The dark naked tops of the Welsh mountains hove in sight, gradually revealing themselves as I descended the sloping ground. At length, appeared the low simple tower of Neston church, just rising above the tops of many modern houses; and lastly—for the tide was out—the smooth yellow sands of the Dee sparkled in the sunlight. At the church door I encountered the old sexton, spade in hand. In reply to a question, he said the Ryleys were certainly buried there, for he buried them both himself, having been sexton of Neston village during six-and-thirty years. Proceeding to the grave, he singled out an horizontal stone entirely covered with lettering, but so coated with dust and soil as to render the inscription undecipherable. This obstacle he volunteered to remove—if I wished—in the course of an hour or two, and at little cost. Gladly giving my consent, I left him to fulfil his commission, while I went to Parkgate, one mile further. Emerging through the wicket at

the lower end of the churchyard, I entered upon the walk described with much feeling by Ryley, at the close of the second series of the Itinerant:—'Every step drew me nearer; and after a tedious day's journey, I arrived late in the evening at Chester. The sight of the old town was always cheering to me; and became doubly so now, because it undeniably proved that the cottage of comfort was near at hand. At ten o'clock the following morning I left the coach, at the village of Neston; and as I walked down the hill to Parkgate, my little white dwelling came into view—need I say the sight was grateful? As I approached, my favourite chanticleer, surrounded by his happy feathered family, as if to announce my arrival, pierced the air with his shrill notes; whilst seated at her cottage door, intent upon a book, sat my friend of forty years—the stimulant to all my labours, the ample reward of all my toils. She saw me not. Standing at the wicket, my mind whispered, 'Oh, Fortune!—if thou wouldst but even gently smile upon our latter days!'—her eye caught mine—the book fell on the grass—and—conceive the rest, ye who can—smile, ye who may.' An interesting walk it proved to me, as to him, and full of thoughts and fancies touching the wanderer and his home. At Parkgate pierhead, about the centre of a row of diversified houses of which the hamlet is mainly composed, an elderly ferryman was seated upon the low sea wall, contentedly smoking a short pipe that had evidently, like himself, become inured to service. Hale, good humoured, weather-beaten, his eyes sparkled with kindly triumph as I enquired if he could direct me to Ryley's dwelling. 'Ryley? Ay, I should think I could.' Following his direction a short distance, I turned

my head for the purpose of taking another approving look at the Parkgate ferryman, and saw he had descended to the foot of the pier, and was stepping into his boat. At the extremity of the beforementioned row of houses, and modestly retreating from the public way, appeared the identical cottage of comfort, and eke cottage of calamity, so frequently referred to throughout the nine volumes of the Itinerant. The simple charms of this 'cot on the bank of the Dee' have been further celebrated by its versatile owner in ballad strains at once humourous and satirical. The place seemed much the same as when the Itinerant took his final leave of it. True, there was no pointer to be seen, or bright chanticleer with his feathered followers; the cow, and the pig, too, were invisible; but the white home still rested on its gentle eminence, while the wee garden and grass plot still sloped pleasantly towards the river. Not perceiving any of the inmates with whom I could accidentally, as it were, drop into conversation, I made bold to enter the enclosure by one of those gates which, while admitting bipeds, are cunningly designed to exclude quadrupeds. Passing over the grass plot, I lifted the latch of the garden wicket, and a few steps brought me to the cottage door. My knock—somewhat lighter than the postman's—was answered by an obliging dame who invited me in. Nothing loth, I became seated in the 'chimney corner of comfort,' where Ryley had so often sat 'smoking the pipe of peace,' while engaged in the composition of his *Memoirs of an Actor*, his comedies, and his rhymes; where, too, his clever little wife, with her 'round good natured face,' had written *Fanny Fitz-York*; and where, lastly, they had closed their eyes upon the world,

after a long and chequered existence. From the front to the back door, the modest mansion was readily surveyed. So low was the roof, that Ryley must have found some difficulty in erecting his tall, slender form, beneath its primitive cross-beams. After bidding good-bye to Ryley's genial successor, and to her two daughters (engaging young women, who showed a dutiful regard for their needles), I lingered near the threshold, taking a parting peep at the fresh, open prospect. The 'silver breakers of the lovely Dee,' dilated upon in the pages of the Itinerant, were undiscernible, for the tide had not yet returned: undiscernible, also, was the Jolly Miller, who 'once' lived hereabouts; but although the burden of his song was no longer carried on the bracing air, his vocal memory, and his legendary interview with bluff King Hal, added interest to the locality. Pleasantly visible, however, were the 'sands o' Dee,' as they stretched far away, on the left, towards Chester, and extended ten miles along the estuary, on the right, to their junction with the open sea. Before me, on the opposite coast, the mining villages of Bagilt and Greenfield appeared snugly clustered, after the manner of gipsy tents, gracefully sending up their white smoke, to curl in striking contrast with the blue mountain back-ground. Withdrawing my eyes, at length, from their holiday banquet, I passed down a bye-lane—long and secluded—which gave diversity to the route, and so returned to Neston, where I found the specified lettering duly brushed and painted, and proceeded forthwith to transcribe the epitaph:

Beneath this stone the Remains of Nanny Ryley, formerly of Parkgate, aged 63, are deposited, & with them every hope

of happiness that this world can bestow on her disconsolate husband, in whose breast a warm and enthusiastic affection, of seven and forty years' standing, remains unabated; which time can never obliterate, nor ought but death destroy. Likewise Alice Kenworthy her revered parent, & Sarah Thackeary a beloved relative, both of Parkgate, highly respected by all who knew them. Also the above named S. W. Ryley, who departed this life September 12th, 1837, aged 82 years.

Ann Ryley expired, after an illness of only four days' duration, on the twenty-seventh of March, 1823, during the absence of her husband in Scotland, on the last of his itinerary tours. How truthfully the epitaph speaks of the old man's affection, and how much his mind wandered under its weight of lonely sorrow, is evidenced by a conversation—or rather soliloquy—which Ryley held with Mathews, at Liverpool, in November, 1823. In a letter to Mrs. Mathews the eminent comedian thus writes, as recorded in his Memoirs: 'I have 'sat' since I wrote, and the artist has just left me; but *I* took the portrait.\* Poor Triste! 'So, you *will* act! Ha! I saw it growing upon you, when you were here last. Why give up your own profession? You degrade yourself! Well, I wish I could do what you can; I'd see the managers at the devil. There she sat, (meaning his deceased wife)—I've her miniature in my pocket. Do you smoke? Ah! I love porter. You are a lucky fellow; but I promised not to croak. I place the two chairs by me at Parkgate that supported her coffin; then I go and drink with the farmers. Ah! you're a queer fellow—you don't like society. My monkey, too, is dead since I saw you—the greatest beauty!—

\* 'Mr. Ryley was Mr. Mathews' *study* from which he took his *Mundungus Triste*.'

always keep the miniature—it shall be buried with me.’—‘What! the monkey?’—‘No, no; how can you joke on such a subject? I love monkeys; they are better than half mankind; but I mean Ann, poor soul! I wish I had a segar; but it would annoy you. God bless you—you are rich—give my love to your little woman.’ During the last ten years of his life Mr. Ryley seldom made use of his pen or his Brooms, but derived his support from the annual contributions of his friends. The precarious nature of such income caused his fortunes to fluctuate, as heretofore, between poverty and comparative plenty. In 1835, for instance, he was enabled to give a general invitation to dinner to Charles Mathews and party, so we may presume he was then—like a summer warbler—in full feather; but shortly afterwards his evil genius again predominated, and the latter days of his existence were clouded by extreme indigence. Poor Ryley! his progress through life was little better than a treadmill progress, consisting of many steps but no permanent rise; resembling, too, the progress of a pole climber at a country wake, who hopefully struggles to within an ace of the top, yet when he stretches forth his hand to clutch the envied prize, is betrayed by the treacherous soap, and comes trundling down to the bottom.

As comparatively nothing is known of Mr. Ryley’s early career, excepting so far as his own book enlightens us, the reader will no doubt be pleased to find the humourous chronicler corroborated by a veritable eye-witness. The apt illustration occurs in a series of interesting ‘Week-Day Walks,’ described by Mr. George Smith of Stalybridge: ‘From sixty to seventy years,’ says the Week-Day Rambler,

'have rolled away, or perhaps a few more, for I am not able to name the exact date, since a dashing young gentleman, from the city of Chester, was bound apprentice to a woollen cloth manufacturer, in the valley of Saddleworth. His manners were so pleasing, and his habits so different from those of the country people, that he soon became an universal favourite. Hunting, shooting, fishing, and racing were his peculiar amusements; he could also drink, sing, smoke, play the violin, and recite the most difficult passages of Shakespear with great effect, which created no little astonishment amongst his new acquaintances, being something very different to what they had been accustomed to. He visited his neighbours, rich and poor, without distinction, giving every one the pleasure of his company. The house of my father being situated near to that in which he resided, he soon found his way to our fireside, which witnessed many a mimic scene and ludicrous entertainment of Samuel William Ryley, for he was the life and soul of company. Those who still remember him as an actor or as a private gentleman will bear me out in this statement. The business for which he was intended was little thought of, for he devoted the greatest portion of his time to the study of the best dramatic authors, and in pursuit of the sports and pastimes of a country life. On the return of Miss Kenworthy, his master's daughter, from school, he became violently in love, and ultimately eloped with her to Gretna Green. The vicissitudes of his life are beautifully delineated in a work which he published entitled *The Itinerant*; in which there is a delightful mingling of fact and fiction. He was author of many popular songs during the time he was proprietor of the

Manchester and other theatres. His style of acting was that of comic old men, and when he retired from the stage, Sir Peter Teazle was left almost without a representative. His wife—little Ann—for that was the name by which he often addressed her, possessed great mental powers. She also possessed, in her own right, a handsome fortune, which was squandered away by acts of charity, extravagance, and wild speculation, when she cheerfully submitted to the privations of a theatrical life.' And so we leave the Itinerant, his wife, his cottage, and his grave.

The range and purpose of this volume necessarily preclude even the mention of many authors whom Lancashire claims as her own:—some who have won the wreath and wear it; others, who see their laurels as Hamlet saw the spirit of his father—in the mind's eye only; yet enough has been indicated to justify a Lancastrians's pride in the literature of his county.

Here may the reader rest, and listen to the writer's closing remark, which is simply this:—Without paying more attention to our living or departed authors than their merits can claim, we may fairly spend an occasional leisure hour in looking over their works or graves; flinging here a thought, and there a flower, as we pass on our business way.